THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly Magazine
Founded A° D¹ 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

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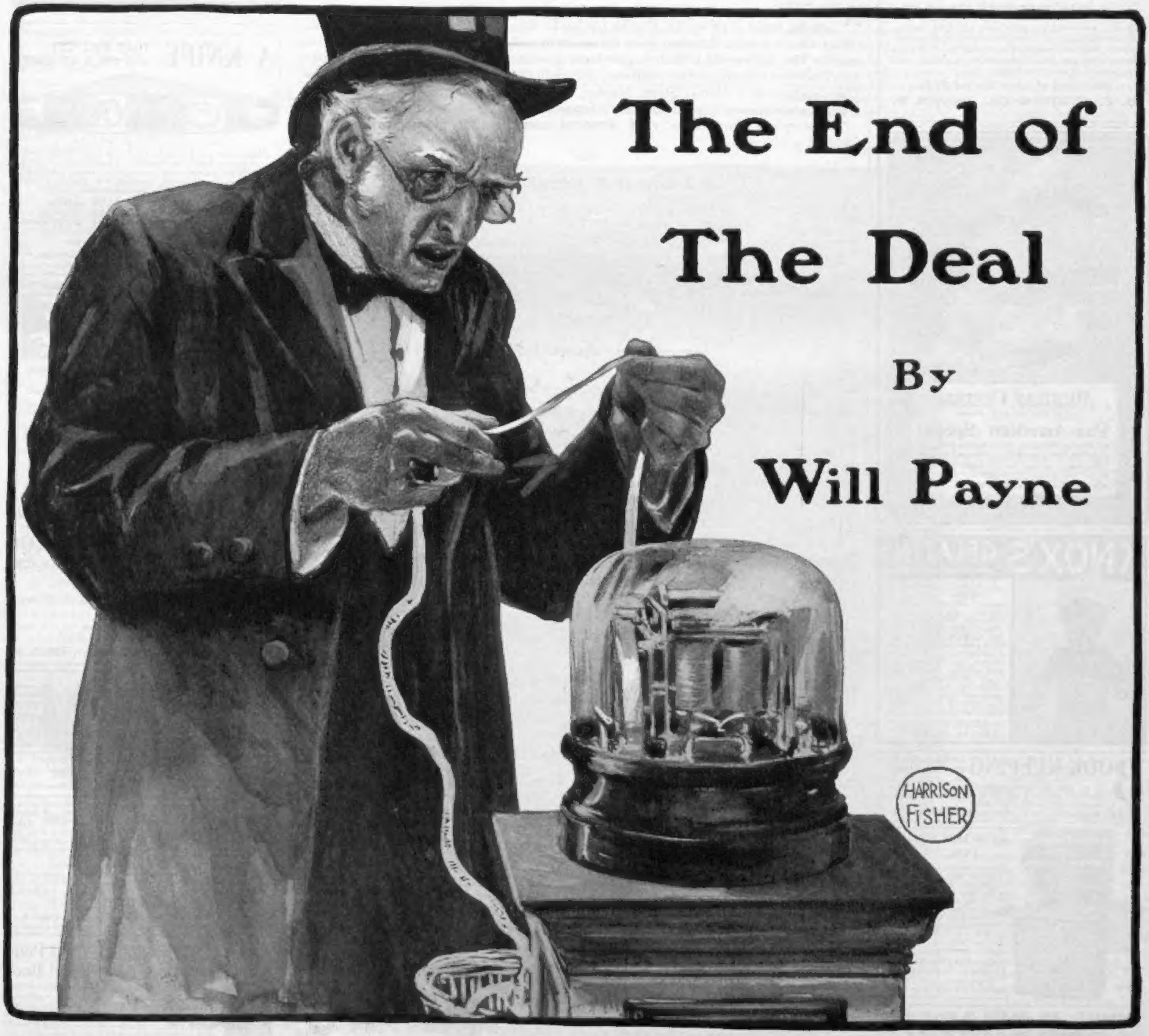

The End of The Deal

By

Will Payne

The Curtis Publishing Company Philadelphia

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THE address label on your magazine tells when your subscription expires. The information is given so that you may renew your subscription sufficiently early to receive your POST without a break. Renewals should be made two weeks in advance of expirations because it is impossible to supply back numbers of the magazine. The entire issue is exhausted every week.

A Word from the Editor

AN EARLY issue of the magazine will contain the opening chapters of a new and very strong serial story by Mr. Hamlin Garland. The author's hero is a young army officer who has been detached from his regiment and sent to relieve a dishonest Indian agent. The resourceful Captain's guardianship of an Indian tribe beset by starvation and driven to desperation by cattlemen and politicians is full of dash and adventure. The daughter of a United States Senator, a land-grabber of the worst sort and the Captain's sworn enemy, is Mr. Garland's heroine.

The story is a powerful and vivid picture of reservation life, glowing with color and fairly alive with action.

A Study of Political Hysterics

MR. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE'S novelette, A Most Lamentable Comedy, will immediately follow the story by Mr. Payne which begins this week. Mr. White's latest work is a study of political hysterics—the story of a State gone mad.

The scene of the novelette is a Western State laboring under the burdens of the panic year. The central figure is a grocery store demagogue whose harebrained oratory captures the State Convention. The story rises to a height of dramatic power and intensity rarely equaled in the fiction of the day

Important Special Articles

DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN, the distinguished Arctic explorer, will contribute to an early issue of the magazine a valuable account of this year's Polar expeditions and what they may be expected to accomplish. This important paper will be illustrated with hitherto unpublished photographs.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH, K. T., discusses, in an early issue, Mr. Carnegie's gift to the Scottish universities. Lord Balfour, besides being Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, is a trustee of Mr. Carnegie's fund, and one of the most distinguished educators in Scotland.

MR. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, who went to Lawton for this magazine and witnessed the "opening" of the Indian lands, will describe the great land lottery and the growth of the mushroom city.

HON. W. E. MASON, Senator from Illinois, will contribute to an early number a witty and entertaining paper, entitled How a United States Senator Earns His Salary. Senator Mason's article teems with anecdotes of the comedy side of public life.

POSTMASTER-GENERAL SMITH is now at work on the third of his brilliant papers on the political careers of James G. Blaine and Roscoe Conkling.

MR. CHARLES R. FLINT has written for the magazine a timely and significant paper on American Brains in Foreign Markets.

Some Clever Short Stories Soon to Appear

The Finger of Hankin
A capital story of a penniless young Englishman, and how a mysterious heiress became his ward.
By CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

The Lieutenant and the Princess
The love story of an American naval officer and a little German Princess.
By MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL.

Miss Wainwright's Adventure
A jolly story of a young society woman who was taken for a pickpocket. (Illustrated by photographs.)
By GEORGE HIBBARD.

His Gift of Eloquence
A clever tale which centres about a volcanic love affair.
By GEORGE HORTON.

The Salving of the Beloochistan
A salt-water yarn of two rival wrecking companies and how their long feud came to an end.
By ARTHUR E. MCFARLANE.

On Good Children Street
A charming story of the New Orleans Frenchtown.
By M. E. M. DAVIS.

The Affair of the Cachalot
A tale of the lady, the foreign office and the stock market.
By VAN TASSEL SUTPHEN.

The Luck of the Horseshoe
A bright story of a journey in a palace car.
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The End of the Deal—By Will Payne

FIRST CHAPTER

THE day's trade was done. Along La Salle Street, from the Board of Trade to the Stock Exchange, brokers' offices were empty of customers. The big blackboards where quotations had been set down were wiped clean, ready for to-morrow's yards of figures. The tickers were still; the telegraphers' desks deserted. Brokers were getting into their overcoats and going home or to a club. The great banks displayed the sign "Closed." Tellers counted up the greenbacks in neatly corded stacks, the gold in pretty pillars of double-eagles. Bookkeepers lighted their pipes and paused a moment for sociability. Armful after armful of letters accumulated in the gaping bags, prepared for the post-office. Janitors were sweeping up the litter. The day's trade with its shift of fortunes was done. An army of underlings cast the accounts and cleared the board, ready for to-morrow's play.

The wide corridor which runs from end to end of the Board of Trade on the ground floor was nearly empty. Brokers' offices flank the corridor on either side, divided from it by glass windows. A window toward the lower end bears the sign, "Lester Wells, Commissions, Grain, Provisions, Stocks, Bonds." The office is the usual affair, with its blackboards, tickers, bulletin boards where telegrams are posted, chairs, cuspidors. A space is divided off by a partition of stained pine and glass, behind which the bookkeepers and telegraphers work. In the corner there is a little den whose door has the sign "Private." This is Wells' room.

Coming out of the der and striding to the corridor, Robert Harper brushed by three men standing close together at the door, talking confidentially.

He heard one of them saying: "The house is way long of wheat. Old man Wells is loaded to the guards with it."

"Well, what if he is? Ain't Bowles on the same side?" said another.

Harper brushed by. He was vaguely aware that their eyes followed him. He even fancied them saying: "That's young Harper, Bowles' nephew, who got dropped on account of that shady business of mixing wheat."

This fancy troubled him only a little, because the other trouble was so much bigger and nearer. His interview with Wells had failed. He had gone to the business place on a forlorn hope of reorganizing his position with Laura. It had been more Laura's hope than his own; yet now that it had failed he was oppressed and disappointed.

His uncle, Jonathan Edwards Bowles, of the Bowles Milling Company, had been his patron, too; had put him through college and then taken him into the huge organization of his business. He had been made manager of the Bowles elevators. The young man knew well enough that Wells liked him little; but so long as Laura liked him so much he could be patient under the father's grumpy hostility. Then the business of mixing wheat happened. They had always been mixing the wheat so far as Robert knew. He went on cheerfully doing the things that had been done, without a thought of certain dusty rules which forbade it. Of a sudden there was a scandal. The abuse had overgrown under long tolerance. A reform was due. The Board of Trade ordered an investigation. Bowles chose to make a statement to the press alleging his innocence. If anybody was mixing wheat in his elevators, he said, it was without his knowledge. He was rather shocked to find such a charge brought against his house. Harper read the statement half an hour after he received the summons from the Board to appear and testify at the investigation. It was clear enough. Obviously he was expected to shoulder the blame. Perhaps, technically, he alone was to blame, for there had been no specific instructions to him from his uncle. He had merely gone on doing what had been done. But his youth and pride arose in revolt. He sent his resignation to the Bowles Milling Company, ignored the summons, and was expelled from the Board. Then Wells' hostility dropped the veil. The broker forbade him the house. This puzzled Harper, for he knew perfectly well that every one in the grain trade understood his essential innocence. It was, of course, only a pretext seized by Wells to vent a hostility based upon recondite grounds.

Meantime the young man knew that his uncle was not ill-disposed toward him. It was merely a point of discipline with the miller, whose vast business organization had its independent life and polity like a state, requiring, above all, loyalty and obedience to the needs of the concern. He suspected that if he should make his apology and submission, take a new oath of fealty, he would be reinstated.

But he never had less wish to be taken back. His eye ran up the cliff-like granite wall of the Board, took in the towering nests of offices which gave the neighborhood its gigantic effect, and he calmly repudiated the whole greedy scheme. He turned toward Wabash Avenue, headed for the office of the young and struggling automobile company where he was trying to make himself a foundation. That was good, anyway. Laura came back to him. The disappointment mellowed. The young people still had their openly clandestine meetings by the sympathetic connivance of all their women friends. They had their complete assurance of each other, their perfect faith in the future. They could wait a little while for the cloud of parental opposition to pass; for the perfected automobile to roll up and wheel them triumphantly away to that sunny future which was already the present of their dreams.

SECOND CHAPTER

AN EFFECT of this triumphal youth and love remained with Wells in his den after Harper went out.

The broker sat by his desk, staring at the door through which the unwelcome caller had disappeared—a tall, bony, round-shouldered, grizzled man of sixty. He wore a rusty and torn alpaca office jacket. A black skull-cap was pushed back on his long, narrow, bald head. The shirt collar, a size too large, stood away from his leathery neck, displaying the prominent Adam's apple. There was a patch of gray whisker in front of each ear. His face was deeply wrinkled. His large, dark eyes fixed themselves upon the empty doorway with a glance of singular power.

Oddly, something about the young man's broad shoulders had suggested the presence of the girl, giving Wells a subtle feeling of his daughter clinging about the obnoxious young man like a rich atmosphere, her love for him pleading with his tongue. The sense of a great loss oppressed the old man's heart. He felt a helplessness against this victorious youth and love which would presently thrust him aside like a troublesome supernumerary, leaving him old, lonely, empty.

At one point in the interview Wells put his finger on that sore spot of the wheat mixing. Robert, pained and embarrassed as he always was when that business came up, feeling that it touched his reputation, eager to exculpate himself so far as he could, had declared that his uncle held no grudge against him. Zealous to prove it he had taken from his pocketbook and handed to Wells a little slip of yellow paper, of the sort used for memoranda, neither dated nor addressed, but bearing the loosely scrawled words: "If you need money come to me. I will let you have what you want." By way of signature were the scrawled initials, "J. E. B."

Now, glancing at his desk, Wells was surprised to see this yellow slip lying before him. Both men had forgotten it in what had followed. He took it up, mechanically, in his surprise, and stared down again at the scrawled characters. His impassioned old mind, moving in its deeply worn ruts, turned from the young lover and centred upon this slip of paper—upon the magic of those scarcely legible initials.

Jonathan Edwards Bowles. When Wells was a youth and helped tend his father's "general store" in the New Jersey

DRAWN BY HARRISON FISHER

"I'm broke, mother," he said simply

His impassioned old mind, moving in its deeply worn ruts, . . . centred upon this slip of paper

village, another youth had come to them, the son of a widow, the poorest of the country poor. Wells, senior, had taken him half from charity, giving him board and a little wage. He did the rougher jobs about the store, mowed and raked the yard—a chubby, barefoot lad with a round, red-apple face. His name was Johnny Bowles. He was frankly considered slow-witted, but he had the most irrepressible good nature, an untiring will to oblige. He ran to do everything with his moony, beaming, red-apple face. Johnny soon got to do more in the store and less in the stable. The country women liked to buy of him on account of his tireless good nature. Wells, senior, was the substantial man of the village—worth, it was said, $20,000. Young Wells was the village beau, the youth of position and prospects. When he and some others of the more elect made game of Johnny, young Bowles took it with his irrepressible good humor. They knew Johnny was stupid partly because he was so everlastingly good-natured. When he started West, they told him the Indians would boil him for his fat. When Wells himself first visited Chicago, then only a big country town, he found that Johnny had escaped the Indians and was making a living shoveling grain out of freight cars.

Johnny Bowles. Even to Wells, for all his familiarity with the facts, some effort was necessary, some exertion of the imagination, to make it seem real that once upon a time the syllable Bowles, that word of power, was no more than the name of a ragged youth. It was like trying to grasp the idea that once the word Napoleon was only the designation of an obscure cadet, signifying no more than James or Thomas. For now Bowles was a magic word. Under its command legions of gold marched out. Its mere form and sound were so charged with power that men's minds changed at the simple sight or hearing of it. A whole world-wide trade acknowledged its spell.

Johnny had saved his wage and been shrewd. His first profit was a Jonah's gourd. His silver dollars were seeds of the giant's beanstalk, producing huge growths over night. He planted in the soil of the new Western empire. His fortune shot up with an incredible rapidity, towering, spreading, finding new roots, becoming colossal with the huge growth of the empire itself. Grain was the line. As the new soil suddenly sprouted and produced harvests Bowles' mills spread to receive them. He had warehouses and mills at Chicago, Minneapolis, Kansas City. An immense industry ceaselessly plying with its thousand wheels and ten thousand hands owned him its master.

Wells had finally come to Chicago, after the long delay in settling up his father's estate, and embarked as a broker. For thirty years he had sat in Bowles' growing shadow and the shade had turned him sick. At first Bowles' success had been his inspiration. If the slow-witted Johnny were such an alchemist, how much more could he do? He set out with a hot, impatient will to overtake the apple-faced boy. He had his successes. Half a dozen times the magic had worked for him. He had laid his eager hands upon a great possession. Like a man with a handicap he had found himself finally coming into the stretch with his competitor. But he had had as many failures as successes. Each time the magic had given out; the possessions had suddenly slipped like water through his fingers; he had been hurled back, stripped, scarcely able to conceal his nakedness from the public view. And Bowles all the time had been going on in his colossal success. This success was too overwhelming, too persistent. Bowles at length acquired a power and prestige which steadily commanded success as though he had learned the secret of it. Wells' bitter soul accused the gods. An inappeasable rage grew in his mind. In Chicago the relations between the two men had never been cordial. Even at first Wells remembered the ragged, apple-faced boy a little too obviously. Bowles had his gift of humor. Some of his humor was carried back to Wells. Now, they never spoke.

Robert Harper was Bowles' nephew and had been his protégé. Wells could not forgive him that. The blossoming of the ragged Bowles into the accepted young dandy hurt his soul. When Harper entered his house palpably in quest of his daughter it was as though he had come invested with the Bowles mantle of arrogant success. It was part of the inveterate and intolerable Bowles luck that this fellow should come after Laura, as though the miller meant to carry his triumph even to what was dearest to Wells. The broker's helpless anger chafed against it in secret. Then came the rupture between uncle and nephew. Young Harper left the Bowles fold. This only increased the broker's wrath, as though he were asked to take Bowles' old clothes; as though a man not good enough for the Bowleses were still good enough for the Wellses. The broker saw the miller sending a beggar for his daughter and triumphing over him anew. The rupture with Bowles gave him a tangible ground, for it reduced Harper, money-wise, to a shred, a tatter. No, he wouldn't get the girl!

Wells looked again at the slip of yellow paper. Without knowing why, he put it in his pocketbook—an act proceeding from an inexplicable motive, a sort of vague voodooism, as though with that slip of paper in his possession he had a bit of Bowles within his power.

For a moment he had a strange sense of that slip of paper in the leather case in his inner vest pocket, as though it possessed a living element. His deep, settled rage against the miller burned strongly up.

He had need of all his rage just now. Long ago he had given up the slow processes of commerce. One could never overtake a Bowles that way. Just now, pulling himself up from the last bitter defeat, he was engaged in one of those speculations which were forever involving him—an enterprise to seize a fortune over night by shrewdness and daring. The passion held out. He came back to the play after each defeat fiercer than ever.

He turned to the affairs on his desk, the rage to win smouldering in his heart.

THIRD CHAPTER

TURNING to his desk, Wells took up the details of business methodically, with experienced competence.

A hand was laid on the door to the dingy den. The office manager slipped in, silently handed a telegram to his chief, paused a moment for instructions, and slipped out. The broker looked down at the dispatch, every faculty in a sudden, cruel arrest. As though a sponge had passed over his brain everything that had gone before was wiped out—Harper, Laura, Bowles himself—although the message contained Bowles' name. It was from Wells' confidential agent at Kansas City. It read:

> Learn from good sources that Bowles is going to ship his wheat to Chicago. He is already engaging cars. You can absolutely depend upon this.

It was not Bowles the man, the former barefoot, apple-faced boy that stood before Wells' mind just then. It was Bowles the power, the abstraction, the factor in the wheat market.

In playing for a rise, Wells had gone too far. The rage to win had led him beyond his depth. The rise must come at once or he would be defeated, ruined, hurled back more naked than ever. He knew that Bowles held a great accumulation of wheat in the Southwest. He had calculated that the miller must keep a certain part of this wheat to supply his mills. He had information that all the rest was engaged for export. Thus Bowles' wheat would disappear. The bears would be forced to buy back their options from Wells at his price. So he had calculated. With this message before him he saw that Bowles intended to bring on the Kansas City wheat, break the market with it, and, when prices had gone to smash, pick up the wheat again at his leisure. In short, the stake which he had thrown upon the table was now big enough to tempt the miller. The screen fell, and instead of the crowd of petty speculators whom Wells had thought to catch in his trap, there was disclosed the giant figure of Bowles, bland, invincible, with millions of untouched resources behind him; looking down at the exhausted broker with an amused smile; calmly reaching over his shoulder and picking up the stake. It was like a skirmish line suddenly uncovering an army in position. It meant instant reinforcements or unconditional surrender. And where could Wells find reinforcements? His own resources were already exhausted in margining the wheat he had bought. It would require three, four, five hundred thousand dollars at once to margin the wheat he must now buy from Bowles. Where could he get such a sum? The last defeat had not only swept away most of his fortune; it had hurt his credit, impaired his reputation for success. His prestige was weakened like that of a general who loses once too often. Men were no longer ready to back his skill and judgment. The old broker perceived his position with absolute clearness. It came fully home to him that he was broken, beaten, definitely overthrown, irretrievably ruined. He had passed through his Waterloo. There was nothing but blank desolation ahead. This perception came to his mind with stunning force. He no longer thought of Bowles as a man. He was only an obstruction, a fact, like sun, rain, frost. There was no rancor in his mind then. He simply stared out at that waste, that endless desolation.

The short winter day was passing. It was already dark in the little den, so that the broker had to fumble for his coat, overcoat and hat. He left the office without speaking and walked slowly along the broad flagging, a lean, stooped old figure, more stooped than ever, huddled in his overcoat. The high granite wall of the Board of Trade loomed cliff-like above him. Ahead, beyond the bank, the vast flanks of the sky-scrapers arose, the serried windows, aglow with electric lights rank on rank, high up into the dark, giving an effect of multiplied and ceaseless human activity. The streets were full of people going home. Wells' blank eyes mechanically took in this familiar scene, which now seemed strangely alien to him, as though he had died and passed beyond the use of those things. As he glanced at the low, strong wall of the bank, it came back to him in an odd way how he had opened his first bank account in Chicago, depositing $5000, and how important the fact had seemed. He found a cab, gave the direction and dropped back in a corner of the vehicle. As they rolled through the streets, aglow with lights and thronged with people, he kept looking out mechanically. There was a kind of infinite weariness in his eyes, as though they were tired with having seen too much. This brave show of life—the thronged, lighted streets with their offices and shops—how futile, how foolish it all seemed! It would be good to shut one's eyes. Only a dull habit of living persisted mechanically. The old man lying back in his corner of the cab still stared out at the streets.

FOURTH CHAPTER

WHEN the cab stopped before his house Wells climbed out, handed up a bill and turned away without waiting for the change. He scarcely heard the cabman's respectful acknowledgment.

The house faced Illinois Boulevard. It had been built before the last defeat, when the broker felt himself far along on the slippery highway to fortune, with firm footing under him. Moreover Laura was just coming home from school. Bowles' splendid new mansion on the Lake Shore Drive had been in Wells' mind. It was a fine house. The architect had done his best by it. Now Wells and his wife lived in a little space on the second floor and Laura did what she could with the costly emptiness downstairs.

Only the father, mother and daughter sat down to dinner—a simple meal, which, however, the butler served with due care because Laura was there. If she had been away the man would have left the old couple mostly to themselves and the dinner would have been as plain as a clerk's.

Wells ate mechanically, in silence, his large, dark eyes downcast, replying in monosyllables, absently, to his wife's few questions.

Laura, too, ate in silence. In color the daughter was between the father and the mother. Her brown hair had glints of red, of which there was a reflection in her brown eyes. She had heard from Robert of the failure of his attempt with her father. She and her mother had had their

A splendid dream dawned upon the girl. . . . She and Robert were to be married

talk. She had prepared herself to make her submission. She called up her power of love, fixing it upon this harsh old man, loving him in spite of himself because he belonged in the lovely world which contained Robert. She waited purposely until he was in the dining-room. Then she came, in her bright, slender grace, her head slightly tilted back, her fair chin thrust out, a faint smile parting her lips, the great fact of the day in her mind, ready to make her submission, to love him in spite of himself.

Wells had already taken his seat at the table, oblivious alike to wife and daughter. He did not even look up. He was scarcely aware of the girl's entrance. Mother and daughter exchanged glances, conveying a world of meaning; Laura, rebuffed, wounded, indignant; the mother silently pleading for the man. Mrs. Wells' broad, flat face still had a certain faded fairness. Her light yellow hair had grown very thin and was thickly lined with gray. Of heavy, ample figure, wholesome, motherly, one felt her still the farmer's daughter. Her attention hung upon her husband with a fond, constant solicitude. She silently pleaded for him with their daughter.

Laura kept her eyes to her plate, pretending to eat. Once or twice, as Wells gave an absent, inapt monosyllable in reply to his wife, Laura looked over at her mother, and again that world of meaning, the whole drama of the household, silently passed between them. The girl's eyes said: "Why does he treat us so? He cares nothing for us. He forgets our existence. My happiness, my love for Robert, my love for him—he doesn't even know of it! Why does he treat us so?" The mother silently pleaded for him, her anxious heart aroused to keep the daughter's love for the father—that mother's legacy which she had seen in so much danger of late and had worked to preserve.

Laura felt the appeal. She felt her own power to love.

"Have you had a good day, father?" she asked presently. Her eyes shone on the silent man, the faint smile parted her lips.

"I don't know," Wells muttered mechanically, aware from the surface of a sound in his ears.

Laura dropped her fork. Her lips trembled. She looked at her mother with indignation, ready to leave the table.

In a moment it came to Wells, through the abstraction, that Laura had been speaking, and instantly a recollection of Harper's visit flashed upon his mind. Startled, in a whirl of confused emotion, he looked up at his daughter. She accused him. She was going to push him aside. He was old, alone, beaten, ruined. For a moment he felt her bright grace shining into his murky world. But he had someway played wrong here, too. He looked down at his plate.

Finishing the meal in silence, he went upstairs to the room they called his study—a companion place to the den at his office. It was a mechanical following of habit. He did not know why he had come there or what he was to do. He got a cigar without turning on the light, drew his chair to the window and sat in the dark, staring out at the Boulevard. It seemed impossible to go to bed and leave the utter ruin impending. Yet he could do nothing. There was a dull, painful confusion in his mind, and he found himself thinking mechanically of inconsequential things in his helplessness and loneliness.

The hours went by. Mrs. Wells sat in her room, the evening newspaper in her lap, but unable to read. Twice she had stolen downstairs and gone noiselessly from room to room merely from the necessity of some kind of action. Twice she had gone up to the closed, dark door of her husband's room, turning away each time, reluctant to enter. Her prescience had guessed a calamity, which grew more and more menacing to her mind as the time passed. She had been to Laura's room, too; but had not entered, unwilling to alarm the girl.

At last, with the courage of her anxiety, she went to the study and opened the door.

"You here, Lester?" she called softly into the dark.

"Yes," a dull voice answered from the window.

At the sound of that dull voice the elderly woman's attitude suddenly changed. Her heart throbbed up with an odd pain and power. It was as though, long ago, one of her children had called to her, ailing, in the night. The hesitation disappeared. She crossed the room at once.

"It's late," she suggested.

Wells lay humped and sprawled in the easy chair before the window, his long arms dangling inertly over the arms of the chair, staring out at the night.

Mrs. Wells pushed a chair close beside her husband's and sat down. Her motherly hand, bold in solicitude, touched his brow, his cheek.

"You ain't feeling very well, are you, Lester?" she asked in the voice she would have used beside the bed of a sick child—cheery, but full of love. The old broker's stricken heart quaked for its sympathy.

"No," he answered dully.

She lifted his feverish hand and held it between her cool palms. "What's the matter, dear?" she entreated.

The broker, his hand inert in hers, looked slowly around at her. The rays of an electric lamp in the street dimly revealed her face, loving, full of sympathy. To Wells it was still the face of Susan Mills. He was scarcely aware that thirty years had changed it. In his habitual preoccupation he was still always aware of the atmosphere of her affection about him, even when he gave least sign of it.

"I'm broke, mother," he said simply.

There was no need of more. She had known indefinitely of defeats, of fluctuations, of ups and downs. Hovering over the life of this dumb, absorbed man, she had caught the effect of that incessant battle uptown. She knew at once what this simple declaration meant. It was the final defeat in the long fight. She understood the depths of his misery. Her hands tightened over his. "Mother" and "father" were the deepest words of their affection, knit into their lives long ago, in more articulate, less-absorbed days, when the little boy had died, and later when the daughter came and was the big fact to both of them. She waited a moment, clasping his hand in a silent outflow of sympathy.

"It's too bad, father," she said, when the silent, caressing moment had passed. "It's too bad for you. I know how you feel it. But it ain't everything. We were happy before you got rich. We can be happy again. You know when little Lester was taken away it seemed that we couldn't ever care about anything less that happened to us. This ain't anything like that, dear."

A strange resurrection of the past took place in the broker's heart. It came up all the stronger because his long abstraction had left it untouched. In his woe he again felt himself simple, a man of affection, surrounded by love. The death of his boy oddly blent itself with this new misfortune, subtly ennobling it, lifting it to pure tragedy. His hard old will softened under the resurrection of affection.

"I've been in pretty hard luck lately, mother. I guess I've lost the knack. Things have gone against me." His voice sounded weak, almost querulous.

"But it ain't everything, father," she insisted gently.

"I could stand it well enough myself," he went on, "but I hate to have it come now. You're gettin' on in years, mother; and Laura——" His voice choked; the old man stopped, stubbornly struggling with his emotion.

"Laura's young, father, and the young don't always understand," the mother said eagerly; "but she knows how much you think of her. She'd be the last one that wouldn't take anything like this in the right way. You'll see that she does take it right. I know she will. For us, father, it just gives us a chance to help you more. Don't you fear about Laura."

"I meant to do mighty well by my girl," said the man with pathetic simplicity. He felt the ruin of that dream also in his failure. The wife saw that tears were dripping from his eyes, and the tears restored him close

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Ballads of the Banks

By Holman F. Day

May health and heartiness never fail
My friend the Whale—my friend the Whale!

There are days when the dog-fish are gnawin' the bait,
  And the mud-eels are naggin' the trawl;
When the brim and the monk-fish and pucker-mouthed skate
  Are the yield from a three-mile haul;
—When the dory-bow ducks with the weight that it lugs
  Of the riffraff and sculch of the sea,
And sculpins come gogglin' with wide-open mugs,
  And grinnin' jocosely at me.
    It's h'ist and lug, and pull and tug—
    Bow-pulley chuckerin'—chugity-chug!
    And all that ye're gittin' won't pay for the weight
    Of powder to blow 'em to Beelzebub's strait.

Then's the chance to be grum if ye're taken that style
  And are sort of inclined to the blues;
When luck is ag'in ye 'tis whimper or smile,
  Whichever's your notion to choose.
Now I—I am sort of inclined to the grins,
  So, after a loaf on the rail,
I whistle him up, my old friend of the fins—
  The jolly Jechookibus Whale!
    —The great Jechookibus, fan-fluke whale,
    A genial chap with a swivel tail;
    Ready for larks and primed for pranks,
    —His jokes are the life of the whole Grand Banks.

I've knowed him sence summer of 'Seventy-four,
  When I "chanced" on a hand-liner trip;
I was out in my dory one day and I wore
  Oiled petticuts strapped to my hip.
I was thinkin' and smokin' and fishin' away,
  As quiet as quiet could be,
When all of a whew there was dickens to pay
  In the neighborhood handy to me.
With a whoosh like a rocket I shot in the air,
  And it seemed like 'twas blowin' a gale;
As I h'isted sky-hootin' I looked, sor, and there
  Was the jolly Jechookibus Whale.
    The great Jechookibus, fan-fluke whale
    Was under me, swishin' his swivel tail.

No. 3—The Great Jeehookibus Whale

He stood on his head with his tail stuck up,
And the game he was playin' was ball-and-cup.

I dropped, but he caught me and filliped me quick
  And juggled me neat as could be;
'Twas as pretty and clever a sleight-of-tail trick
  As ever ye saw on the sea.
At first I was skittish, as you can see why,
  When I found myself up there on air,
But as soon as I noticed the quirk in his eye
  I was over my bit of a scare.
'Twas a humorous look he was throwin' to me
  As there I continuered to sail,
While under me, funin' and grinnin' in glee,
  Was the jolly Jechookibus Whale.
    The great Jechookibus, fan-fluke whale,
    He fanned and fanned with his big, broad tail,
    Till my petticuts filled and I floated there,
    Like a thistle-balloon on the summer air.

'Twas the slickest performance, our dorymen swore,
  That ever was seen on the Banks;
He lowered me back in my dory once more
  And I giv' him my heartiest thanks.
And I reckon he liked me and thought I was game,
  Because I wa'n't yowlin' in fear;
For over and over he's done just the same,
  This many and many a year.
When dog-fish are gnawin' and other men swear
  As they jerk at the sculch-loaded trawl,
I know I have some one to cuff away care,
  If only I whistle a call.
Then up from his bed on the dulses he spins,
  And I boost myself over the rail
For a sail on the tail of my friend of the fins—
  The jolly Jechookibus Whale.
    —The great Jechookibus, fan-fluke whale,
    A jovial chap with a swivel tail;
    Ready for larks and primed for pranks,
    He drives away blues from the whole Grand Banks.

May health and heartiness never fail
My friend the Whale—my friend the Whale!

JUMPER OR OFFICE COAT?

By Herbert H. Vreeland

President of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, of New York

THE young man who is about to enter business has generally an instinctive objection to soiling his hands.

The nice, clean office, with its well-ordered desks, its rugs, its revolving chairs or swinging stools, and its general air of comfort, appeals to him much more strongly than the grimy shop or factory. In the office everything is quiet and sedate; the clerks wear starched shirts, white collars and clean clothes. In the shop there is a jangle of noise and a plethora of dirt and grease; the workers there have smutty faces and black hands; in place of the office coat and the creased trousers they wear a soiled jumper and overalls. In the office work begins at eight or nine and often it is over by five. In the shop the whistle blows at seven and knocking-off time doesn't come till six. In the one place there is nothing more onerous to do than shove a pen; in the other, work means sweat and effort. In the office a man may start in at ten or even twelve dollars a week; in the shop he is lucky if he starts at five. All these appear good reasons why the beginner should choose the office. Nevertheless, when a young man comes to me I always turn his mind to the shop. I point out to him that the thing to do is to work for the future and not for the present; to look ahead. That being so, the advantage is all with the shop. Though he may start in at ten dollars a week, the average office man will probably never get beyond fifteen. In the shop the five dollars a week at the start may lead to a hundred dollars a week.

The Best Business Knowledge Not in Books

The young man who starts in at the shop is learning something new every day; he is forging steadily ahead and making himself more and more valuable. If he has brains his opportunities will be immeasurably greater at the end of two or three years than are the opportunities of the average man who went into the counting-room. He will find more and better openings. He need never be out of work.

This is easily demonstrated. Let a concern put an advertisement in a newspaper for a clerk or a bookkeeper or an accountant, and there will be thousands of answers. An advertisement for a man with a mechanical training will probably bring no answer at all because the demand for good mechanics is greater than the supply.

If the mechanic has brains and a capacity for management his advancement toward an executive position of importance is very much more certain and rapid than that of the office man. He will be very much better qualified, as a general thing, for supreme control. Of course, there are many instances where the man who started in as office boy or clerk got to the head of affairs in large industrial concerns. But this was in spite of his beginning, not because of it. In these days, when great enterprises are being merged on every hand under one head, it is especially true that the man who knows the business from the ground up has a decided advantage over the man who is a mere theorist, who has absorbed his knowledge through account books and letter files. Mr. Charles M. Schwab, President of the great steel combination, is a conspicuous illustration of this fact.

There was a time when the ordinary business man with no practical training was acceptable enough as the head of an industrial corporation. But, with the vast extension of our business and the new methods that have come in vogue, the stockholders now demand that the person whom they intrust with the supreme management of their business shall be a practical operator. As the scheme under which we are growing continues, this condition will be more and more pronounced, and the chances for the boy who started in the shop will be proportionately increased. He will know all the details of the business, or he will if he is the right kind of a boy, but the chap who started in the office will know nothing of the practical workings of his concern. The tools which the office man has been taught to handle, the books, give him no control of the situation.

The accounting department of the corporation, large or small, though in some respects one of the most important, is in other respects the least important. It is entirely apart from the real work. It is supernumerary. The accounts may, if necessary, be made up behind locked doors. They may be kept thousands of miles away from the scene of operation, and those who keep them may never even see the operations with which their figures have to do.

It is not necessary that a man should sleep in a stable in order to learn how to drive a horse. But to be a good driver, he should certainly know how to put on the harness, to feed the horse, and to look after its general well-being. It is the same way in business. To be a good driver, a good administrator, a man should know his plant from end to end and have a perfect knowledge of its departments. No one would think of making a boss-carpenter of a man who had never shoved a plane, or a master-mason of one who had never handled a trowel.

At the same time, however, though it is true that the road that leads through the shop or factory is the safest one to follow for those in search of real success, it is a blind path to him who has not brains or ambition, who lacks application and enterprise, who does not look beyond the narrow confines of the four walls within which he works. To succeed, something more than a knowledge of mere mechanical details and an expert hand is necessary. Though he works all day at the plane or the lathe, at construction work, in the ditch, or wherever his task may place him, the young man who has his eye on the top must work at night as well.

He must read books and absorb all the literature that he can lay his hands on pertaining to the business at which he is employed. He must use his mind as well as his hands. The young lawyer and the doctor, the clergyman and the professor, have only laid the foundation for their work when they have completed their college course. In order to achieve success they supplement the knowledge which they have absorbed at the university by constant reading and studying. And so it is with the young man who strives to be something more than a mere mechanic all his life.

With the advance that has been made in recent years in systems of supplementary education the road to success for practical workers is easier than it has ever been; much easier than it was ten years ago. Now we have night schools and technical institutes on every hand, and where these are unavailable the worker has at his command a number of excellent correspondence schools that teach the theory and science of engineering, electricity, and all the other pursuits that require technical knowledge, almost, if not quite, as well as it is taught at first hand.

The Man Who Knows His Business

The right sort of a worker, the one who is fitted to command on a large scale, will go even further in the matter of understanding his business. He will not rest content with merely making himself a master in the branch or department in which he starts. He will make himself equally master in every other department of the enterprise with which he is connected. If he is with a railroad he will familiarize himself with construction work as well as with the workings of the passenger and freight departments. He will know all about the motive power, the building of locomotives, and the construction of cars. It was my good fortune to serve at different times in my railroad experience in the traffic department, in the department of motive power, and in the department that had charge of the maintenance of way. I took pains to acquaint myself with all the details in these various branches. When the opportunity came for advancement this varied knowledge helped me more than anything else. It enabled me to handle intelligently any problem in any department of the work put under my charge. Naturally, I was more valuable to my employers than if I had had knowledge of only one specialized branch. The man who grows up in only one department is often narrow. If he is put in general charge of a big property he is liable to look at all questions from the point of view of his specialty, and to give undue prominence and importance to the department out of which he graduated. From this there is liable to grow a one-sided management which makes it impossible to get the best results.

This is an age of specialists, but it is also an age of great things, and the specialist has unusual opportunities to become the chief director if he is built that way. The higher the place, the scarcer in proportion are the men suitable to fill it. The specialist who bears this in mind will steadily broaden his field. He cannot hope to direct a big undertaking properly unless he is as familiar with one branch of it as with another. There are in all enterprises departmental jealousies. The chief of every division naturally looks upon his own particular line of work as the most important to the general results. He will try to push his department at the expense of the others. That is only human nature. It is one of the chief duties of the head of the enterprise to determine between the claims of department chiefs. He must have a nice conception of the value of each man's work to preserve a proper balance and assure harmonious operation.

Under the system of consolidation that has come in all important lines of business, that man is most important who can harmonize his various departments to the best advantage and make them into an integral, cohesive body where the waste caused by friction is reduced to a minimum. To do this it is necessary that the man should be able to decide from personal knowledge on any question that may come up. He must know the chief engineer's work as well as does the chief engineer himself. He must be an expert in the duties of the general superintendent. He must have as thorough a knowledge of the accounting department as have the treasurer and the auditor. He must know all about maintenance.

The Working of the One-Man Plan

In some of the big railroads, as, for example, the Pennsylvania and the New York Central, the organization is such that the head directs only in a general way. There the executive work is divided, with a vice-president in direct charge of each division. But the tendency is more and more toward the concentration of power and responsibility in one man's hands, with direct communication between the heads of departments and the president of the corporation.

It is so with the recently organized steel corporation, and it is so with the Great Northern Railroad, controlled by Mr. James J. Hill. Mr. Hill operates his railroad under the one-man plan, and the results he has achieved under this system have caused a general awakening in the railroad world.

The time has gone by when any enterprise, no matter how great it is, or how old, or how profitable, will be permitted by the stockholders to stand still. In the past, when, for instance, a railroad was built and equipped within a given territory, the work in a measure was supposed to be completed. The president had nothing to do but to operate his plant. Now, however, things are moving so fast that no property is considered to be finally developed. In order to keep abreast of the times and to make the most of the opportunities that present themselves there must be constant improvement, constant enlargement, constant betterment. Old ideas are being bowled over so fast that it taxes the most expert intelligence to keep up with the procession, and only those can stay at the front who are constantly on the lookout for new ideas.

It is this fact that is making so many opportunities for young men of the right sort. The older men in any business are naturally conservative and often unprogressive. They have established reputations and are loth to imperil them by proposing or carrying out new departures. They find it difficult to adjust themselves to new ideas, and as, at the pace at which we are going, success is to be won by a corporation, as by an individual, only by new ideas, the field for the younger men is necessarily enlarged. Originality, boldness and enterprise, backed by knowledge, are valuable as they have never been valuable before. And as the years go by these qualities will be ever more in demand and ever better paid.

Technical knowledge is specially important at this day to the governing head of an enterprise, because, as we branch out into competition with the world, we are forced to do business on a steadily declining margin of profit. The penny has come to supplant the dime as a unit in estimating profits, as the dime some years ago supplanted the dollar. In consequence, that concern thrives best which can shave closest to the cost, and in this contest the man who knows all about the processes which he controls through having manipulated them in person, the man who entered the shop as an apprentice, has a tremendous advantage over his rival whose knowledge is theoretical. He can best reduce everything to the lowest practical basis. He knows where improvements can be effected. He knows where expenses can be reduced without a proportionate reduction in quality. He can distinguish between the ornamental and the essential.

The Prophets of the Grain Fields

By Bernard Willis Snow, Crop Expert

THE saying that agriculture is the base upon which rests the nation's business is trite, but true. Knowledge of crop production is necessary not only to those dealing directly with farm products—the spinner, the packer, the miller and the railway man—in planning their operations, but it is equally vital to every interest dependent upon the purchasing power of the rural population. Bountiful crops and rural prosperity mean increased industrial and commercial activity, and as industrial campaigns must be planned in advance, knowledge of probable crop results is necessary. Out of this necessity has grown what may be called the modern science of systematic crop reporting. How much a correct knowledge of crop conditions may mean to a single individual is only to be realized by reference to actual experience.

A Chicago millionaire packer, who is occasionally interested directly in the grain market, said to me:

"I once spent $25,000 to satisfy myself as to the size of the corn crop—and then lost a quarter of a million because my information was wrong!"

And he seemed to regret the $25,000 wasted far more than the quarter million bet on the wrong side.

The foundation of all crop reporting is the almost universal greetings among farmers of different districts when they meet: "How is your corn?" "How did your wheat turn out?" "How are your hogs doing?" This is an instinctive effort to keep posted beyond the confines of personal observation, and crop reporting shorn of all of its technical features and intricate elaboration is simply the carrying out of this idea upon a scale covering a State or a whole country. A crop report is a consolidation of the views of a large number of local observers, each taking simultaneous cognizance of conditions in his own district. Obviously, before any large number of opinions can be so consolidated as to present a composite photograph of the situation, they must be reduced to a common standard. This is done by requiring each observer to express his opinion of the prospect in comparison with an ideal standard of perfection. Such perfection is represented by 100, and the local reporter discounts that figure by whatever percentage is thought to measure the failure of the growing crop to reach the ideal standard of perfection.

This puts the opinion of the observer into concrete mathematical form, and the figure thus given is technically known as the "condition" of the crop.

The Reports that Wall Street Wants

Modern crop reporting has two objects: first, to furnish indications of final results before harvest; second, to furnish, at the end of the season, statistical records of the year's harvests. The latter presents valuable data to the economic student and to the farmer who plans his operations intelligently in the light of supply and demand; but the former is of more direct importance to the commercial interests of the country, and covers entirely the interest which the speculative world has in crop reporting. Wall Street and the grain pit care little for the actual records made up at the end of the season after the crop is garnered; but every nerve is alert during the season to secure first knowledge of any impending change in conditions.

During the recent excitement over the great drought and partial destruction of the corn crop, a heavy speculator said to me:

"It's nothing to me whether the corn crop shall finally prove one billion or two billion bushels—just tell me will it rain anywhere in reach of the telegraph to-night. That's all the crop report I need!"

This spirit of impatience which demands "quick action" is responsible for the conflicting news, estimates and "reports" which each day in La Salle Street and Wall Street masquerade as crop reports, but which have nothing in common with systematic crop reporting. This character of crop news is aptly illustrated by the reports of traveling "experts," men who visit agricultural districts during the growing season and relying upon their own observations report their personal views to their principals. Results in these cases depend entirely upon the personal equation—possibly upon the market position of principal or agent—and such methods being primitive, unsystematic and incapable of furnishing data of more than comparative value may be dismissed as having no proper part in crop reporting. The opinion of Farmer Meadowfield, who has not been outside of his township, may by accident accurately reflect the crop situation of the whole State, or the observations of Mr. Cityman, who catches fleeting glimpses of a corn or wheat crop from the windows of a Pullman car, as he crosses the country at the rate of fifty miles an hour, may prove correct; but in either case the chances are decidedly against the accuracy of such information when the limited field of actual observation is assumed to typify existing conditions in a whole State, or group of States. Yet the mass of "information" that is daily conned on bulletin-boards or in the commercial press by anxious speculators has little better foundation than this.

The Two Great Crop Bureaus

There are only two bureaus that carry on systematic crop reporting upon a scale that covers the whole country. One is the Statistical Division of the United States Department of Agriculture, the other the bureau maintained by the Orange Judd Farmer under the direction of the writer. In both cases exactly the same system is followed. Local observers are selected at different points thoroughly covering the productive regions of the country. These men are selected because of their intelligence, experience and good judgment, and circulars of inquiry are sent them at stated intervals during the crop season. Each observer confines his answers to the facts as he sees them in the limited definite area which is under his charge. This area is usually a county, unless the latter be so divided naturally that radically different crop conditions are apt to prevail in its different districts, in which case a county may have two or more sponsors.

In the private bureau these observers number about eighteen hundred, who report their local crop situation monthly or oftener. They are mainly large farmers, but include a liberal leaven of country bankers, business and professional men. These men receive nothing for their services beyond a regular copy of the paper they serve. Those reporting to the Government bureau also serve without compensation. They are public-spirited, intelligent citizens who appreciate the fact that accurate knowledge of crop conditions is essential to the farmer, and who thus become, as it were, members of a cooperative association to which each contributes for his own locality and through which each keeps in touch with crop conditions in every part of the country. For them the bureau is a clearing house for crop information.

I am sometimes asked if the men who make up this corps of local observers can be trusted as intelligent, representative and responsible men. The list is carefully chosen and is under constant scrutiny; but a fact or two will best serve to answer the question. For many years the late Governor Mount, of Indiana, served as reporter for Montgomery County, and after he went to Indianapolis he personally interested himself in securing a competent successor. From his desk in the Executive Mansion he frequently furnished valuable information and suggestions of crop conditions and changes, maintaining his interest in the work up to the time of his death. Included in the present list of observers is a former Governor of Nebraska, an ex-Lieutenant Governor of Kansas, a number of members of State legislatures and scores of men chosen to local official position by their fellow-citizens. The list of names is not only a representative one but stands for the best intelligence of each community represented.

Almost universally the work is done in the spirit of genuine personal interest and consequently with decided thoroughness. Occasionally, however, a local reporter is found who enters so enthusiastically into the spirit of crop reporting that he makes it his personal pastime and diversion. In Illinois is a retired farmer of considerable wealth who has, at his own expense, organized for his county a statistical bureau which is a miniature of the larger one he so ably serves. He has a man in every township of his county to whom he sends a copy of the circular he receives from the Chicago headquarters. By following this practice for ten years he has collected a set of agricultural records probably not equaled by any other county in the United States. In the collection of this information he has found as much pleasure and diversion as the city man derives from golf, yachting or any other pastime.

How the Crop Condition is Appraised

The questions put to these local observers change with the season. The estimated acreage devoted to each crop in comparison with the breadth of the previous year is early called for. Between seed time and harvest seasonal changes in prospect are followed by means of frequent reports upon condition of the growing crop. The technical feature of the system is the standard by which "condition" is measured. The word condition is not used in a sense defined in any dictionary. It is employed to cover collectively all features of a growing plant that have a bearing on final fruition. Thus it covers at the same time growth, color, vigor, root strength and "stand." Every observer who reports "condition" is presumed to note all lines of plant development and including all together in one general statement to modify his figure as there appears deficiency from perfect development in one or more lines. A situation in which there is absolute perfection in every detail of plant development is represented by 100, and this figure is discounted sufficiently to cover any deficiencies from such perfection.

Each report relates to the crop situation inside of a known definite area, and the county reports are consolidated into a State average by assigning to each the importance which the county has in the production of the crop in question. The condition in a county having one hundred thousand acres devoted to corn has ten times as much weight in determining the State average as has the condition in a county having but ten thousand acres. These condition figures are important during the growing season because they furnish a basis from which may be figured with reasonable accuracy the crop promise at any time before harvest. The records for many years establish the fact that, broadly speaking, a given "condition" at harvest is followed by a certain rate of yield, not absolutely but closely enough for an early forecast.

After harvest the season closes with detailed estimates of actual rate of yield, which, when applied to the acreage returned at the beginning of the season, furnishes the final estimate for the year's crops. These final records are, of course, valuable to students, but the commercial, and especially the speculative, world has little interest in them. Long before the crops are harvested the commercial world has formed its opinions and outlined its business campaign on these opinions. These opinions are crystallized around the condition reports during the growing season, consequently such reports are the valuable features, from a money standpoint, of systematic crop reporting. Their value to the speculator in cotton, grains or railway stocks can be measured only by the extent of his interest in the market. This value, however, is greatly enhanced if an operator or group of operators can secure the facts even a very short time before they become public property as it enables them to reap the benefit of market fluctuations which follow.

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Explanatory Lines to A Hen

By Charles Battell Loomis

Why has no poet tuned his lyre to thee
O heat producer of the tempting egg?
Is it because thou hast not lofty flight
And dost not cleave the clouds with tireless wing?
Is it because thy throat, though full of sound,
Is ever songless in the strictest sense?
If on the score of plumage birds are hymned,
Thou in thy various breeds hast feathers fine;
And trim and trig and neat thy figure is.
But there is that within thee, luckless fowl,
That roueth up man's ire. Brains, good hen,
Would serve thy feathered tribe as they serve man.
A single ounce of ordinary sense
If placed within thy noddle, noodle fowl,
Might make thee mend thy ways to such extent
That poets would rise up in every clime
And sing thy obvious beauties, foolish bird.
What lack of wisdom makes thee leave thine eggs
When little egglings fain would pip their shells?
What pleteous lack of sense that makes thee stand
Lead-footed on a vainly peeping chick,
Quite heedless of his protestations shrill?
Why, in thine efforts to escape the rain
That comest in thy pathway, dost thou fly
Almost beneath the wheels, O rattled bird?
It is because, though instincts thou mayest have,
They never are at hand when wanted most;
And, having of good brains no veriest jot,
Blind luck and that alone attends thy way
From pip of shell unto the headsman's block!
Not lack of plumage, lack of power to fly,
Nor lack of ear-compelling melody,
But lack of brains has barred thee from the line
Of birds made famous by a poet's pen.
Wherefore, O heat heed thou the Psalmist's word:
"With all thy getting understanding get!"
And, peradventure, in the years to come
Some Bryant or some Shelley or some Hogg
Shall shrine thee in the amber of his verse.

A Tale of a Tenderfoot—By Hamlin Garland

Author of The Eagle's Heart

YOU know," said the big drummer who dominated the smoking compartment of the Pullman, "there's only one country more wonderful than the future, and that's the past. Now, you think I'm a sober, commonplace citizen of Kansas, and I am, but I have a past. I wish I was as sure of my future as I am of my past. Now, seeing old Seger brings up to my mind my earliest experience with the Indians." The Oklahoma merchant was new to the country and anything about Indians received his undivided attention.

"My father was a farmer down near Winfield, and one Sunday morning I went out to hitch up the horses to go see my girl—I was a lathy youth of about nineteen, I reckon, and had been shaving for a year or two, and considered myself a right lively length of stovepipe. Well, sir—the old man came out and vetoed the team. 'They've been working all the week, and if you want to go see Maud you pace the ground afoot,' he said.

"I resented this. 'Pay me what you owe me and I won't bother your danged team,' I said, hot as ginger.

"This kind o' tickled the old man. 'Harry,' says he, 'I'll do it. You're too smart to keep in this climate. I'll give you twenty-five dollars, and you say good-by to mother and dig out. When you feel able to come home and act like a grown-up, and not like a blame one-gallus schoolboy, I'll be glad to see ye.'

"Well, sir, I dug out. It wasn't so funny to say good-by to mother and sis, but—I got away. Naturally I struck for heroic country. Oklahoma was the special ground for exploits. There were a lot of Injuns and bad white men down there and I thought I was sure goin' to war when I crossed the line. I got a chance to camp along with a freighter, and sooner or later I turned up at Darlington, dead broke.

"The Cheyennes were considered pretty quiet by that time, but I was nervous as a *locoed* horse. Any Injun scared me, but I couldn't back out and go home—in fact, I hadn't any money left to go on, so I started looking for a job. Somebody sent me to John Seger, who was running the mail route to Fort Elliott then, and needed a driver. He was a short, good natured kind of a man.

"'Where you from?' he asked.

"'Kansas,' I said.

"'Can you drive a span of mules?'

"'Sure thing!' I says.

"'All right; come around to-morrow morning and I will go over the route with you,' he said finally, but I could see he didn't like my looks.

"I turned up next morning and we went over the route. It wasn't a hard drive, but it went across a rolling prairie where everything looked alike to me. He asked me if I thought I could find my way next trip, and I said, 'You bet your life!' or words to that effect. And I did, but it was much as ever. The third trip it turned off cold and gray and sloty, and I didn't like my job a little bit. I was scared of Injuns all the time, too. They all looked alike to me.

"Well, I had two or three mishaps and didn't get my noon shift of horses till three o'clock. That put me way behind on my drive—and 'long toward night the snow began to thicken up and covered my track. I was driving along with the wind in my right ear, and when I found myself off the road I pulled in wrong. The wind had changed without my knowing it—anyhow, I was off the road and night getting thick as ink. I fussed around trying to find some sign, till my heart was clear down in my boot heels. Finally I pulled up. 'What's the use?' I said. 'I'm lost and I might as well wait till daylight.'

"So I sat there all humped up till it began to get light. I was horrible cold and stiff, but I kept stampin' around once in a while. Finally it was light enough for me to see the ground—but the formation was all new to me. I didn't see a thing that I remembered. Near me on the left was a big mound and I figured that from that mound I could see something to help me out—so I left my team and started up there. It just illustrates how unbaked I was when I tell you I hung to the mail sack and carried it all the way up that path. The route was a part of the Star Route, but Seger didn't know it and neither did I.

"I didn't succeed in seeing anything familiar because I persisted in looking in the wrong direction—if I hadn't been so blind I could have seen the smoke of the ranch. Will you believe me—I not only didn't discover the ranch, but I went down on the wrong side of the peak and lost my mules! Yes, sir! I said: 'Well, there, if that don't settle things! My mules have run away!' I was so sure of this that I didn't even walk around the hill to where the team was standing! I sure was locoed then.

"But I hung to my mail sack! I dragged that cussed thing all day, and, as I kept walking away from the butte, of course I left my team farther and farther on the side. I was yelling with hunger by this time and tired with walking, but I kept moving—had to, it was so cold and damp I couldn't sit down.

"When night began to fall again I saw the necessity for fire, and I got into a little draw where there was some wood and found I hadn't a match. I used them all up the night before trying to find my road. I was knocked out for a while—but I began to search my pockets and finally, down between the lining of my vest, I dug up four broken bits—just the heads. It took two of them to light a fire, but I got one going by and by, and I spent the night alternately dozing and building fire. The wolves discovered me along about midnight and began to howl. I didn't know much about wolves, but it didn't take an expert to know that their howling meant business for me.

"As soon as daylight came I took my mail sack and started out. I walked hard that day. I climbed every hill to see if I could catch sight of something to go to, but the country all looked alike, and I reckon I walked in a circle. When night came I used another piece of a match to start a fire. The wolves howled around me again and I got no sleep at all. Wasn't these hard lines for mother's boy? That night was seven weeks long, but it was over at last, and when it was light I took my faithful mail sack and started for home and mother.

"I was followed all that day by three big gray wolves. They were on to my weakness, all right. They figured out that I was going to go down some minute and they were hungry, too. When they came too close I'd click the lock on the mail sack and they'd jump out and leave me more space. Now you'll ask what I thought about during that day. Well, sir, that's the funny thing. I only thought of two or three things. I was too scared to think. My mind kept repeating the same thing over and over. Some full sentence would come into my head and would run 'round and 'round like a mouse in a churn. I kept looking ahead and saying: 'When I reach that hill I'll see the ranch'—things like that. Then the wolves would make a diversion. I was just crawling by this time—reeling along like a drunken man—and those ornery devils all in easy reach to catch me fallin'. I was blind—mentally and physically—everything was covered with a haze. I suppose the sun shone—but it seemed kind of sickly to me, and when it went down it was blood red.

"Then I began to dread the night. A fourth wolf joined the others and I knew they were narrowing in to make a meal of the boy from Winfield. I was so scared for fear of wasting my one match that I dropped it twice, but I got a blaze going. It was a miracle that I was able to do it, and I had sense enough to drag up all the wood I could, but I was so sleepy and weak—I couldn't keep awake. 'I must sleep, I must sleep, I must sleep,' I kept saying, and *sleep* was a beautiful word—it seemed to make me drowsier just to say it—I said it soft like this: 'S-leep—s-leep!'

"While I was building my fire I had to scare the wolves off three or four times—they were sure desperate—but the fire kept them off finally. When I sat down to rest I knew I was gone! I couldn't keep awake. I crawled up close to the fire and threw on my last stick and then stretched out on my back and the wolves troubled me no more.

"I had been partly delirious all day, I reckon, because I had visions of farmhouses and cattle—but my sleep was filled with dreams as vivid as life. Of course I dreamed of home. I thought it was a cold winter day and I was on the old road toward the farm. I thought I was hungry and lame—kind o' paralyzed—and the fence posts wouldn't go past me fast enough, but after terrible effort I got to the door. Mother was there, but the house was cold. Everything was dreary and disappointing. She was glad to see me and said, 'I'll get you some supper right away,' but it was chilly and I didn't get warm. Then she brought me some mince pie, but when I reached for it—it was cold and hard as ice.

"Then I thought I was out fishing with the boys, wading in the creek at night with a spear and a torch. I could hear the owls in the woods, and wolves, too. My brother Billy had a basket of grub tied to him, and I said: 'Bill, my legs are cold and I'm awful hungry—let's have our cold chicken now.' Then I tried to light a fire on the bank and I couldn't, and when I turned to get something to eat Billy was gone. Well, sir, I was tortured all night by dreams like that—and when I woke up I was lookin' right into the yellow eyes of a monstrous wolf. He was within six feet of me just debating whether to give me a whirl or not. I tried to lift my arm and I couldn't do it. It weighed a thousand pounds! But my head moved a little and the wolf hopped away. I tried to kick and my foot was immovable. I was paralyzed from the chin down!

"I very nearly died right there. My heart stopped beating. I couldn't feel anything of my body—I seemed to be alive only in my head. I knew perfectly well that if the wolves understood my weakness they'd pounce on me. I dared not make a struggle for fear they would understand—so I lay and watched them. They were growing bolder every minute. They sat 'round me on their haunches, the foam dripping from their jaws. They'd snap their teeth and shake their heads the way a dog does at a cat—and they'd sort o' hunch along a little nearer each time. Oh! but they were anxious to set tooth in me.

"I said: 'This ends it. They are going to eat me.'

"Then my imagination took hold, and I saw myself being dragged around by those beasts—my head their football—and then I got mad. A wave of warm blood went over me and I made some kind of yell.

"They jumped away—but not far. I don't suppose the yell scared 'em much. However, I set my teeth and began to roll my head from side to side and open and shut my hands. This started the wolves a-snarling again, and they drew in close—so close I thought they were coming to take breakfast sure. But I yelled again and lifted one hand, and they retreated. I was desperate by this time. My arms were coming to life and the pain was so terrible I couldn't think. At last I got so I could click the lock on the mail sack and that sent the beasts flying—they thought it was a gun, sure thing.

"I worked until I could sit up, and at last I turned on my stomach, drew my feet under me and arose to my knees. This seemed to set the wolves crazy. They saw I was escaping, and back they came, making little, short leaps, their tongues lolling. But my faithful old mail sack still had the power to stand 'em off, and when I arose to my feet they slunk away—but they didn't leave me—oh, no! they knew they had a sure thing. They only had to wait, as they were used to do with the wounded buffalo. The time would come when I must lie down. With the mail sack trailing behind me on the road, I started blindly to walk. No, I didn't think then, I'd got beyond that—I knew I'd die if I stayed where I was, and so I walked. When the wolves got too near I'd turn on 'em—I think that mail sack quelled 'em.

"About this time I saw a wheel track on the soft red loam. I was pretty fer gone, but that wheel track set me thinking: 'Is it a wheel track or is it like the cold chicken of my dream?' I concluded it was real and I followed it, and in the course of time, say an hour or so, I came in sight of an Indian teepee by a strip o' timber.

"Now, I was just about as scared of an Indian as of the wolves, but not quite, so I went forward and had the satisfaction of losing the wolves. An old woman walking around the camp hissed at the dogs, and stood watching me for a few minutes. She could see I was on my last legs, and she called out some gibberish, and an old man, a villainous-looking old chap, also squinted at me as I crawled up.

"As I got near, I expected to be killed and scalped, but I began to say: 'I'm hungry—hungry! Don't you understand?' The old man came out and took me by the shoulder and hustled me into his tent. 'I'm hungry,' I kept saying. The old squaw hurried off, and soon she came back with some kind of a stew in a dish—the smell of it made me wild. I jumped at her—but the old man caught me. I screamed and tore, for I thought he wanted to keep me from the grub. The old woman gave me a spoonful, while the old man held me tight, and then offered me another. I snatched that and then I turned in and bit and clawed till the old man let me go. I ate then like a famishing dog, and of course it made me sick—as the old man knew it would.

"I had a little sense then, and let the old squaw regulate my diet. I got sleepy finally, and that was the last I knew till the next day about noon.

"I reckon I slept full twenty-four hours. I awoke hungry as ever, but I couldn't walk. My legs had no more gimp than a string o' stewed macaroni. The old heathens were having a discussion over me. The old man wanted to kill me right there, I could see that, but the old squaw argued him out of it—that's the construction I put on their talk.

"Finally the old woman fed me again while the old man hitched up his team, and what I tell you now is incredible, but it's true. The old man came and took me and tumbled me into his wagon on a bundle of hay—he had a big, good-natured face, but I knew the treacherous heart of the redskin. He wanted to fool me, but I understood him! He went back for his rifle and another ax. I saw his plan—he intended to take me away out on the plain and murder me!—where no trace would remain of my blood.

"For a while I lay there so weak I couldn't formulate any plan of action. While the old people rode along chatting like a couple of old farmers, I knew perfectly well what was in their black hearts. In a hundred dime novels I had been told of their devilish cunning. 'They are probably gloating over their plan,' I said to myself. I watched them with the eyes of a lynx, as my story books used to say. Well, all of a sudden the old squaw whipped out a bag and began to spread on the old man's war-paint. Well, that settled it. I knew that when an Indian puts paint on his face he is as dangerous as a rattlesnake. 'I will sell my life dearly,' said I to myself, keeping close to the text of The Boy Scout. I could see the gun and the ax under the seat, and my plan was to snatch the rifle and kill the old man. I could settle the old woman with the ax. Every time the old man looked behind he smiled—oh, the murder of that smile—he was thinking of my cries at the stake!

"'Long about sundown they came to a deep ravine and a creek, and as I saw them turn aside from the road I knew my time had come. I looked around on the pleasant sky and the hills, and the world seemed too fine to lose—and when the old woman climbed out and seized the ax I started up. 'You'll never burn me at the stake!' I yelled, and seized the gun. I was much stronger than I had felt for days. I leveled the weapon at the old man. 'Die, fiend!' I screamed, and pulled the trigger. The gun was empty. I threw it down and began to cry like a babe. I was resigned to my fate.

"I had given the old man a jolt—I could see that—but he had me at his mercy.

"He made a rush and got me by the wrists and shook me hard. The old woman brought some string and they bound me fast—my hands behind me. I gave right up, then, and called for my mother. I had made a good try and failed. I could hear the old devils talking, and finally they both climbed in and drove like split. It got dark and they crossed a river, and the waters came into the box, but they just kept clattering along. I knew they had some special torture in store for me. I was to be burnt at the stake where all the tribe could see my agony. I had earned the most violent death they could conceive of.

"Finally I heard dogs barking, and then a familiar voice and the words: 'Hello, Starving Elk, what is it? What's the matter?' I struggled to look over the wagon-box.

"'Is that you, Mr. Seger?' I whined.

"'Well, what's the meaning of this?' he asked as he dragged me out and unbound me.

"'These Injuns tried to kill me,' I said.

"He looked at me kind o' queer, as much as to say: 'My poor boy, you're twisted, sure.' And the old redskin made a motion that I afterward knew meant 'crazy.'

"Seger helped me into the house, and fed me and rubbed me till I could stand, while that old Injun and his wife sat at the table and ate and told their story.

"'He's a-lyin',' I said; 'he tried to kill me.'

"'Why, you little idiot!' said Seger finally. 'I've known Starving Elk and his wife for twenty years. He's one o' the nicest old men in the world—and his wife is as kind as your own mother. They think you're gone crazy.'

"He got my story out of me by bits, and finally, when I reached the point where the Indians came in—he roared and roared, and those blamed old Injuns joined in. 'But he put on his war-paint,' I said, as if that proved something.

"'War-paint!' he said. And when I explained, he roared again. 'Why,' said he, 'the old man was coming to visit the Agency and was just finishing his toilet—as you would put on a paper collar.'

"Well, now, all this shows what fear and imagination will do. I had misread every movement of those good old souls. They had done everything they could for me and I had charged 'em with murder, and if that gun had been loaded I would have killed the old man, sure thing.

"Of course I couldn't stay in the country after that. A man who would lose his road and his team, carry a mail sack around for five days, and fight people trying to feed him, and draw a gun on a harmless old man who was killing his ponies in the effort to reach a doctor—such a nickel-plated, condemned idiot as I was—necessarily had to leave the country. Seger got me a chance to accompany a freighter, and I got back to Winfield, but still pretty pale and weak.

"Say, men! didn't the little old shack look good! There was no illusion about mother and the mince pie she gave me that night, while I told my story. Oh, I cooked up a good one, bet your bottom dollar. I made out the case to be desperate—but I had to let up on the old squaw—changed her into the old man's daughter and had her save me from his vengeance. See! Ever hear of a dodge like that? No, my name ain't John Smith: it's just plain Sam W. Smith.

"Yes, I saw Seger some weeks ago. He said my Pocahontas was living yet—but the old man had gone to the happy hunting-grounds. So I sent the old woman the finest shawl in stock. Seger wrote me she was mighty pleased with it, and remembered me. Do you get off here? Well, so-long!"

While I was building my fire I had to scare the wolves off three or four times

Walking in the Army

By John Edward Jenks

A STANDING army is efficient in proportion to its ability to walk. One of the prime qualities of the good soldier must be his strength and endurance as a pedestrian. This, of course, does not apply to the cavalry, or to that part of the artillery which is transported on wheels, but as the bulk of an army is made up of infantrymen it is absolutely essential that the foot soldier shall be trained in marching, and those who have charge of soldiers devote a great deal of time to the question of the best means of getting over the ground on foot and the protection of the soldier against the effects of long marches. There are many elements which enter into the question. Among them are the meteorological conditions, and care is taken not to expose soldiers to excessive degrees of heat or cold, rain or snow. These diminish the vitality of the soldier and hamper a body of troops in its march across country. The ground marched over also comes into consideration. Dust and mud are features which impede the progress of troops, and level country is more toilsome to the foot soldier than gently rolling country, which affords a change in the muscles used in walking. The couriers of the Orient recognize this when they walk backward to rest themselves on their long tramps.

There has always been a dispute over the amount of equipment which should be carried by the soldier who walks. The tendency of new troops, especially of volunteers recently mustered into service, is to make themselves literally beasts of burden. They start out with all sorts of equipment, which they are glad to discard by the way, especially if the march is long or if, as in Cuba, the climate is wearing on pedestrians.

The experts have from time to time given their consideration to the step which should be taken by the soldier on the march. The average military gait is not conducive to comfort. It soon wearies a man who is not accustomed to it, and in some armies it is positively harmful. The Germans have a scissors movement which is picturesque but most fatiguing. The army surgeons who study the effect of walking and the action of the muscles say that the best step is that used in the French army, which was copied from that of the trained couriers of the East, who are able to make seventy-five miles a day without much effort. The French call this gait the *pas de flexion*, and the troops with which experiments have been made have shown that the step is conducive to long marches without fatigue, and that it leaves the soldiers at the end of the trip in condition for other work.

This is not so with the step of all armies, and certainly is not so with our own, for, after a long tramp, our soldiers are hardly fit for any physical effort, although sometimes a battle is fought, after a tedious march, under the excitement of engagement.

In flexion marching the hips, knees and ankle-joints are slightly bent, the body is inclined forward, and the feet are placed on the ground with little emphasis. This is in great contrast with the flat-footed, leg-rigid and stamping movement of the German army, which means a shock to the whole body every time the soldier places his foot on the ground.

The length of step is prescribed for an army without regard to the height of the man who must take it. In our own service the marching step is thirty inches, measured from heel to heel, and the rate is one hundred and twenty per minute. In the German army the length is thirty-one and two-tenths inches; in the English army thirty inches; in the Russian twenty-eight inches; and in the French army twenty-nine and five-tenths inches. The Russian step is shorter than any of the others and is said to be correspondingly comfortable.

Those having command of troops must be careful, in marching, not to overdo them. In our country the infantry is considered to have made a good day's march if it covers fifteen or sixteen miles. It is an interesting fact that well-trained infantry will, in a long campaign or on a continuous march, outmarch cavalry. On long marches the troops are warned against drinking water to any extent. Sometimes the men are allowed to fill their canteens with weak, unsweetened coffee, which is found to satisfy the thirst better than pure water. Tobacco-chewing is usually prohibited, for it increases the thirst, and smoking is not deemed advantageous. Oftentimes a twig or pebble carried in the mouth will offset the sensation of thirst.

There are a number of devices to relieve the tediousness of marching. Marching men upon whom silence is imposed are a melancholy lot, and for that reason a certain amount of talking is permitted. Singing is encouraged as lessening the labor of walking and as occupying the mind of the soldier. In the Russian army picked soldiers do singing for their organizations, for it is not always well for men to expose their throats in inclement weather. Of course, martial music is the best means of stimulating men on the march, and the fife and drum are the best of this class of music furnished. The trumpet is found to be not particularly attractive.

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A MAN in a fight wants the other fellow to do all the arbitrating. And that is why arbitration fails.

WORK sweetens life—but the doctors say that too much sugar is not good for the human constitution.

AMERICAN politics will never be altogether right so long as the unknown man makes the strongest candidate.

EVEN with the short corn crop the country might pull through by making less whisky and more corn bread for one season.

PRACTICAL forestry is now the fad. Having cut down the trees man will now raise trees. And man is called the intelligent animal!

NEW YORK and Philadelphia are trying to reform themselves by showing that each is worse than the other. Possibly both are right.

THOUGH Mr. Bryan is not a candidate for the position he still talks like a man who would not drive a nomination away with a shotgun.

NO DOUBT the Czar of Russia would sleep better if he had an arrangement whereby his subjects were not obliged to use dynamite when they want to petition the throne.

IT IS the evident intention of the Democratic party to try out a variety of platforms in different States to see which kind will support the greatest number of people without straining.

AFTER Lord Rosebery made his recent speech practically withdrawing from the Liberals and placing himself upon his own summit, the Spectator declared that the world nowadays has little use for men who set themselves above their party organization. The individual diminishes, so to speak, and the mass becomes more important in making the history of mankind. We have seen in this country a tendency of the same sort, and in most cases the Mugwump is now a party man, although he has not surrendered his independence of judgment, and can still cut a ticket with all the skill and swiftness of the expert that he is.

The Troublesome Tariff

ONE result of the benefactions of the millionaires is rather curious, but perfectly plain and reasonable. Mr. Schwab, for instance, joined the noble band of givers, and for a while was handing out money by the thousands and tens of thousands. Mr. Carnegie is still far ahead in the size and frequency of his bestowals. Other gentlemen connected with the Steel Trust do not mind the number of naughts they place upon their checks. It is a demonstration of generosity without precedent in history.

Naturally it follows that money so freely given must come from extraordinary opportunities, and thus the public is learning a fact which the steel magnates are proving by their own action: that they are enjoying golden privileges under the tariff legislation of the United States. The matter is further clinched by the United States steel manufacturers who sell steel, after paying the large sums in freight, to English customers for less than they will sell it in the home market. Out of these conditions something interesting should certainly come.

President McKinley seems to realize the impending difficulties, and his idea, as intimated by his friends, is to obviate any open antagonisms by the extension of reciprocity agreements, and by the gradual amelioration of the more acute differences that now separate us from unrestricted trading with other nations, at the same time taking all care to give full protection to our own people. Altogether it is a mixed-up affair, and the statesman who can lead the way through the labyrinth will deserve all the fame that can crown success.

If art is a jealous mistress, business is an exacting master.

Not According to Solomon

TWO small boys were sitting on the bank of a canal. One fell overboard. Help was within call and the child might easily have been saved. But the other boy was curiously impressed. He made his way quietly to the drowning boy's home, sat on the steps and waited for the father, and finally said: "Mister, Johnnie's down in the canal drownded." The curious thing about it was the inability of the living boy to realize that he had not done the right thing. He thought that if the boy had been saved and carried home wet he would have received a severe thrashing—and that was worse than drowning ever could be from his blunted point of view. Parents who whip their children ought to be able to find some sort of a lesson in this true story.

In this age of the world, the old saw about "sparing the rod and spoiling the child" seems to have lost its force. A few days ago Ambassador Choate in one of his clever speeches in England objected to the system of bodily punishment which still obtains in some of the schools in that country. The newspapers took it up and uttered their criticisms, but after all was said they had to admit that the American Ambassador was right. In the good old days no boy was expected to grow up a virtuous and pious lad unless he had been well switched, not only by his schoolmaster but by his parents; but there has never been anything to prove that these inflictions contributed to his mental or moral worth.

The bottom is a good place to start, but a bad place to stay.

That Impossible Boycott

THE threatened anti-American tariff league in Europe has crumbled at the first touch of German exclusiveness. The German landlords want to keep out American farm products, but they are equally determined to keep out the products of Austria and Russia. So the new German tariff strikes out impartially all around, and the Austrians and Russians forthwith invite the American enemy to make common cause with them against their neighbors.

It is natural that Austria and Russia should resent Germany's action more than we do, for trade with Germany is vital to them and it is not to us. We find it profitable, or we should not carry it on, and we should be sorry to lose it, but still if it were lost, no American would suffer any serious inconvenience after we had once adjusted ourselves to the change.

Ours is the only country in the world that could get along in perfect comfort without any foreign trade at all. Of course it is impossible for any conceivable combination to deprive us of all our commerce—the bulk of it would remain after Continental Europe had done its worst—but if every dollar's worth of it should disappear we could continue to supply ourselves with every necessary and luxury of life. A few thousand farmers who now raise wheat for export would devote their land to sugar beets and pastures for blooded sheep. Our tea farms in South Carolina would pass from the experimental to the commercial stage. Our cotton acreage would be somewhat reduced, and flax and silk would be produced instead. The cultivation of coffee would be encouraged in Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines. Factories would be built for the production of fine textiles, glassware and metal goods that we now import from Europe. The destruction of our forests would be checked by the stoppage of exports of lumber. The deserts of Arizona, New Mexico and Southern California would be redeemed to give us the semi-tropical products of the Mediterranean, and our island possessions could supply us with everything that we now draw from South America and Africa. The gold of Alaska and of our Western States and Territories would more than supply all our financial needs. In short, this Republic is a world, a planet in itself, independent of any and all other countries.

But the other countries would find some difficulty in getting along without us. Deprived of her transatlantic trade Germany would have to give up her dream of an imperial merchant marine. It would be hard to run the cotton mills of Europe without American cotton, or to fill European mouths without American grain.

The people of Europe lived, of course, after a fashion, before America was discovered, but there were not so many of them as there are now, nor did they have so many wants. They have multiplied to a point at which their population could hardly be sustained without American commerce. If they were deprived of it they would have to come down either to a lower standard of living or a smaller population. The result would probably be a wholesale emigration to the United States. In other words, we should get as much trade with Europeans as ever, but it would become domestic instead of foreign trade.

There is nothing more pathetic than the return coupon of the summer vacation ticket.

The Reunion of the Republics

ONE of the really big ideas of American statesmanship in the nineteenth century was the plan to bring all the Republics of the Western Hemisphere into a concert of sentiment, with the hope that it might lead to a concert of action. The Monroe doctrine did much to foster this scheme. It found its first able champion in Henry Clay, and it reached its fruition under the man who most resembled Henry Clay in his political fortunes, James G. Blaine. It was while Mr. Blaine was Secretary of State that the Pan-American Congress was held. It was the most notable event of a notable year, and no public entertainment in the history of the country approached it in brilliancy or in the sustained interest of its proceedings. It cannot be said that any wonderful good grew out of it, but it was a substantial beginning of great things. A Bureau of American Republics was established in Washington, and has been worth all that it cost; for ever since the Pan-American Congress our trade with Central and South America has steadily increased.

In line with this general development is the Pan-American Congress which is to assemble in the City of Mexico in October. Mexico's invitation was broad and general. It mentioned five items of business: First, a continuation of the discussions of the former Congress; second, arbitration; third, an international court of claims; fourth, plans for the protection of industry and commerce; and, fifth, the reorganization of the International Bureau of the American Republics.

On its face everything looked safe, but it happened that Chili has certain differences on hand which its statesmen are safeguarding from outside interference. Thus it was that the minister of Chili addressed the committee and said that his Government did not desire to discuss arbitration if it was to have anything retroactive about it. Chili was willing to talk arbitration for the future, but objected to having it applied to anything in the past. The committee held a long and earnest session, and finally adopted an article stating that the arbitration item was prospective and in no way retrospective, and that no action that might be taken would apply to any existing questions. On top of this, difficulty arose over the committee's action in arrogating to itself the authority to interpret Mexico's invitation. The discussion has been the diplomatic event of the season, and there have been several tempests in the little teapot. Undoubtedly everything will be straightened out in time and the Pan-American Congress will be able to assemble with representatives from all the countries, so that it will escape being misnamed. The value of the convention will undoubtedly be great: it will strengthen the good work that has been done; it will bring the Americas closer together in friendship and in trade, and it will open a way for the more prompt settlement—and possibly for the prevention—of many of the revolutions and quarrels which keep some of the South American countries from developing their magnificent resources.

One kind of bait will not catch all kinds of fish.

Our Childless Future

HOW our dear old mother-tongue grows! And what a debt it owes to the newspapers—especially to those of the yellow variety. There are no more children in these newspapers—no, not one. Children have become "tots"—all, rich and poor, good and bad—all "tots." Consider the headlines: "Lost Tot Found by Policeman Flanigan;" "Brave Rescue of Three Tots by Officer O'Rourke;" "One Hundred and Twenty Tots Endangered by an Orphan Asylum Fire." It must have its effect upon the language; tot is the coming word.

But who would be guilty of standing in the way of progress? 'Tis a survival of the fittest, no doubt. "Tot" is a shorter word than "child." All we need is to become familiar with it. "I have a wife and seven tots," a man may announce as easily as in the old way. "How many tots?" the census-taker will inquire. The teacher is destined peculiarly to reap the benefits of the new word. "Now, tots, which of you can tell me who discovered America?" The stage shall share: "Tee-wenty years ago I drove her from me door—me only tot!"

The day shall surely come, too, when our quotations will be modernized, as Chaucer is now. Tupper, Martin F., shall feel its vivifying touch: "A tot in a house is a well-spring of pleasure." Shelley shall say that he "could lie down like a tired tot, and weep away the life of care." Our descendants shall delight in these philosophic truths: "The tot is father of the man," and, "Men are but tots of a larger growth." Then there is "Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's tot." How much he missed in not having the resources of modern English at his command.

But we of the present cannot hope to see the universal acceptance of the new word, however much we may wish it. We may cry with the poet, "Oh, ever thus, from tothood's hour, I've seen my fondest hopes decay." But the glorious language which we inherited marches on, and we may console ourselves with the thought that Heaven still lies about us in our totency.

Footnotes to a "Literary Life"—By Opie Read

III—Meeting an Old Friend

ABOUT the streets of Memphis I walked, marking time until the train, which I hoped was to carry me safely into Arkansas, was ready to crawl down upon the grunting ferry-boat and across the Mississippi River. Editor-in-chief of the Carlisle, Arkansas, Prairie Flower was I, so the forwarded prospectus had grandiloquently declared, but how far toward the scene of my duties I was to ride, how far my few nickels would carry me, was a serious question. In those days, especially in the South, railway management had not begun to trample upon the rights of passenger conductors, so I was not compelled to buy a ticket in order to get on the train. And this reminds me of a man who for many years was a conductor on a Southern railroad. One day the superintendent sent for him.

"We have decided to dispense with your services," said the great man.

"Why so?" the conductor inquired.

"Well, we have heard of your numerous investments, and we don't believe that in condescending to remain in our employ you place the proper estimate upon your own dignity."

"All right," said the conductor. "You seem to know best. But I should think that the stockholders of this road ought to feel grateful to me."

"How so?"

"Well, the road is going into the hands of a receiver, ain't it?"

"It certainly is."

"Well, I'm the man that's putting it there. Good-day."

—I halted long enough to tell him that he had but a few more bowls left

This was the road that I was to patronize, and it was now in the hands of a receiver. But this made no difference with me. I had walked over roads that were clear of debt and over roads that were not paying expenses, and was accustomed to both methods. How fortunate is the man who thus can accommodate himself to established conditions!

Down upon the ferry-boat the train crawled, and out upon the opposite shore it crept, feeling its way over a trestle. The sun was gone, frogs were croaking, and darkness lay upon the green bosom of the swamp. The conductor came along, and into his hand I dropped my melancholy nickels.

"Where do you want to go?" he asked.

"Carlisle. I am the editor-in-chief of the Prairie Flower."

Arrogant minion of a bankrupt corporation, this did not startle him, and thinking that he had not understood I repeated. It didn't fease him.

"This will take you as far as Hazen," he said. I asked if Hazen were on the other side of Carlisle, and giving me a cobblestone eye he passed on. The train crept, the trestle creaked. A child cried, a drunken man sang, the frogs croaked. Late in the night the conductor came along and plucked the check out of my hat. "You want to get off at the next station," he said.

"Next station Carlisle?"

"Hazen. That's where you want to get off."

"No, I don't want to get off there."

"I say you do."

You may have taken it into your head that I want to get off there, but I'd like to bet you that I don't—and give you back half your money when I prove it to you."

Was that a gleam of humorous light coming slowly out of the depths of his cobblestone eye? The engine shrieked at Hazen, somewhere off in the dark, and I waited, trembling. One long whistle—not to stop—and the train rushed on. I plucked at the conductor's sleeve as he passed me.

"From the bottom of a grateful heart I want to thank——"

"I'll put you off if you don't hush."

Yes, sir; thank you.

Why not mention his name? Old Wash Flack, known over all the South, as true a soul as ever hid a warm heart with a cool eye—and years ago, when the summons came, "All aboard for Eternity," he went with never a regretful look behind.

Carlisle! Warren's letters had led me to believe that this town was a great emporium, and I expected to see long rows of gas-lamps and to hear the rumble of carriages. But there was not even a station house. I got off in the dark, looking, or trying to look, about, and finally saw a red eye of light coming toward me: the postmaster with a lantern. Surely the city must be near, just over the hill. "Town over the hill?" I asked.

"Reckon it is."

"How far is the hill?"

About sixty miles.

Perhaps Old Wash was right. Maybe I did want to get off at Hazen. But now through the black lace air a ray of light came feebly; from the hotel, the postmaster said; and thither I went, to inquire for my friend, the business manager of the Prairie Flower. In a room of rough weatherboards behind a shelf that served as a counter, stood an old man, a character in his way, Steve Tupelo, proprietor.

"Is there a man staying here named Warren?" I asked.

He coughed and reluctantly said that there was, and over me crept the chilling conviction that Warren had not paid his board.

"Do you want to register?" he asked, and when sadly I said yes, he took a sort of notebook out of his pocket, plucked a short pencil somewhere from his vest, and told me to go ahead. I inscribed my name in his album and he put it back into his pocket.

"We've got a good big rush on at present," said he. "A wagon-load of folks come in this mornin' an' I can't p'int out the exact spot whar you air to sleep, but go up thar an' do the best you kin."

He nodded toward a ladder. "Is Warren up there?" I inquired.

"Yes, up thar summers. You won't need a light—feel around an' you won't tromp on nobody."

Like cross-ties his guests were lying on the floor. Over in a corner I found Warren, who clutched me and laughed, so delighted was he to know that now that I had come the enterprise would be a success. And of our hopes we talked, till a man said: "Here, I've stood that as long as I'm goin' to. Shut up." From another part of the room there came a "click, click," and after that we talked and laughed in whispers. Told jokes—you've heard of the men who told jokes in the dark and clapped their hands over each other's mouths to "see" if there were a laugh. We actually did this. Warren had a broad grin and I was rewarded.

In Arkansas to-day many a hilltop is adorned with a college, but in those days, at the end of the Carpetbag régime, the old culture had passed away and the new had not come—it was a mediæval condition, except in the capital city, where the light had always burned. Looking back I wonder that Warren and I were not shot—for printing so poor a paper. The citizens said that Carlisle was a coming town. Once when a passenger train had been delayed on the side-track the census was taken, and our rival city, Des Arc, over on the river, grew furious with jealousy.

"Say," said the county judge to the coroner, in the jealous town, "ain't you goin' to hold an inquest over the feller that was killed here this mornin'?"

"Well, I'll claim my fee, but what's the use in holdin' of the inquest? He's from Carlisle."

And it was in such an atmosphere that the Prairie Flower lifted its petals to catch the dew of patronage. The Des Arc Citizen denounced us as the blood-stained remnant of a feud from Kentucky, but this helped us. An old Kentuckian subscribed for the paper. "If them's the sort of folks you are," said he, "I want your sheet. It will make me feel at home when I git lonesome." And the village wit was also a subscriber. But he demanded his paper unprinted. And on every publication day we would send him a blank sheet, and once when it went astray he came round to the office and entered a complaint.

An election came on, and with fervor we supported the claims of Jack Brock, candidate for constable. But he was defeated and could not pay for the extra copies ordered, and this threw us into financial straits. Persistent negotiations for a loan failed; and one day the man whom we had opposed as a candidate for constable came in and put a log chain around our press. Warren was indignant. "Do you mean to insinuate that we are not to get out the current number of our paper?" he demanded.

"Sich mout be gethered," replied the constable.

So there we were, with the constable choking the throat of the press. And our skulking rival! This is what he said: "Oh, the Prairie Flower! The first frost killed it."

"I wouldn't care so much," said Warren, "but for the moral influence of the suspension. I am afraid that it will hurt our standing in the community"—by which he meant our credit at old man Tupelo's hotel. We slept in the "editorial" room, in a large box filled with prairie hay. We took turns about in housekeeping, and one morning when it was my turn to stir up the bed with a lath, Warren went to breakfast. And shortly afterward, when I followed him, old man Tupelo halted me in the "office."

"Good-morning, sir, good-morning. Beautiful day," said I.

Ahem, yes. Say, it strikes me that you boys air mighty fur behind with yo' board."

That so? Why, I thought we were ahead."

"Yes, ahem, I reckon so."

"Well, see Mr. Warren. He's the business manager of the paper."

"Yes, ahem, I have seed him. I have seed him till I'm sick of him."

"That so? Well, I'll see him after breakfast."

"Ahem, but you needn't eat any breakfast."

"Oh, that's all right."

I went back to the office and there sat Warren on the bed, chewing a straw. "That's all right," he said to comfort me. "Don't worry. He'll see the day he can't eat."

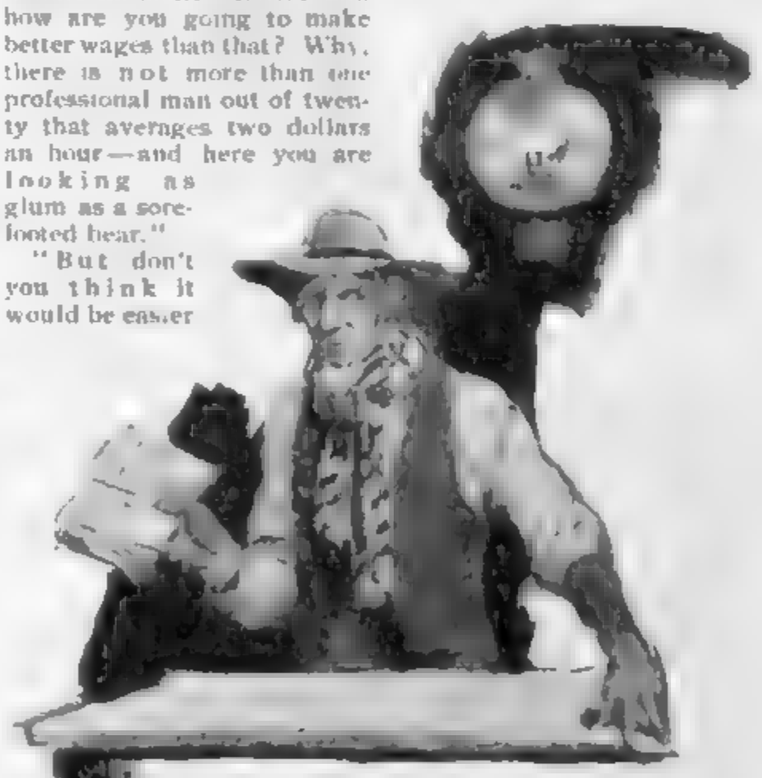
"But we see it now."

"That's all right."

"You are the business manager," I replied.

"Yes, and you get me business to manage and I'll manage it. Oh, I've solved the problem!" he cried, with delight in his eyes. "Oh, my inventiveness never goes back on me. We'll eat—we'll wear diamonds!"

I had confidence in him and we shook hands. But after a time I ventured to remark that I should like to know something of the scheme, the inspiration, that was to relieve us of our present difficulties and deck us with precious stones. "Why," said he, "we'll start another paper." And when my countenance fell he upbraided me. "Next to ingratitude I hate lack of spirit," said he. "Here we are, with everything before us—oh, but it's discouraging to have a man look at me that way. I'll bet you that I can go out right now and in three hours get three subscribers—one an hour, paid in advance—two dollars an hour. Where and how are you going to make better wages than that? Why, there is not more than one professional man out of twenty that averages two dollars an hour—and here you are looking as glum as a sore-footed bear."



"Do you want to register?" he asked

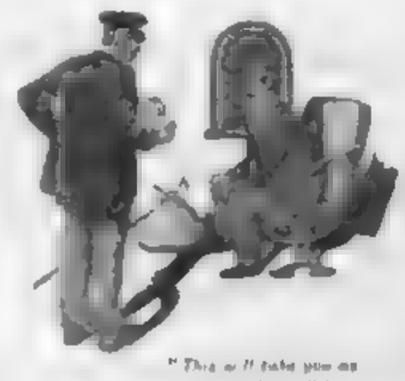
"But don't you think it would be easier to revive this paper than to start a new one?"

"Of course not. We want spirit, and there's more spirit in a new thing."

"But what are you going to do about unexpired subscriptions? You can't ask the old subscribers to pay for the new publication when we owe them on the old one."

"Ah, you are a simple child. Don't you know that they'll forget the old paper in the hope that the new one will be better? Progress, that's the word." Away off somewhere a dinner bell rang. "The air is full of sarcasm," he said. "I'll bet old Tupelo is having that thing rung, but it's all right—he won't hear many more bells ring, I'll tell you that."

Without money, credit, press or type it is almost impossible to start a paper, and for a few days our prospects were dark. While walking about, musing over a story that was destined to be returned by all the



"This will take you as far as Hazen," he said

Editor's Note—The first of the three papers in this series appeared in The Saturday Evening Post of August 10.

literary weeklies, I noticed that Warren spent the most of his time at a blacksmith shop. Not long afterward his object was made clear; he came into the office with a key to fit the padlock that silenced our press. "This," said he, "solves the problem. The law came down upon the Prairie Flower but it can't take into account a thing that doesn't exist. The new paper has done nothing to offend the law. The name of the old paper was too effeminate, too pretty. I named it to please a widow who subscribed for two copies. But the new publication shall have a more masculine title. We will call it the Log-Chain."

We did, and the paper had a spurt of life. Occasionally the constable called, but, always anticipated, found the press locked. He remarked that it was singular that a paper could be printed without the use of a press, and Warren replied that in the printing business there were many phases which a constable was not expected to understand. But one night when we were in a rush, having received an order for nearly a dozen extra copies, the agent of the law slipped in upon us and gruffly demanded the key to the situation. Anarchy was not a part of our plan, so we surrendered, and thus the Log Chain existed only in back numbers.

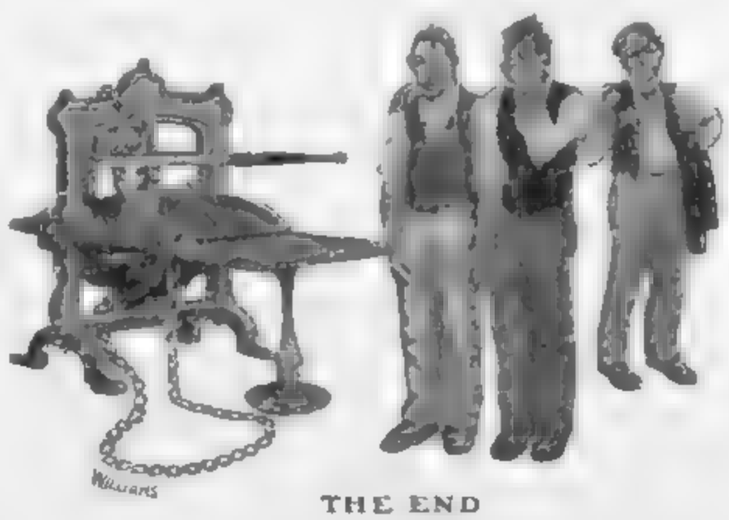
Thus jolted, Warren's spirit drooped for a time, but arose again. "We can't afford to leave as good a town as this is," he said. "When you quit a town you acknowledge defeat; it hurts your standing in the community when you quit a town. And aside from business reasons I want to stay here a while longer. I want to be an eye-witness of the day when old man Tupelo can't eat. He was in bed all day yesterday, but this morning I saw him sitting at the window with a bowl of soup, and I halted long enough to tell him that he had but a few more bowls left. Oh, he's gone. Whenever a man mistreats me, there's no use in talking, he can't stay here. You remember another house where we boarded. Fellow turned us out and a few days afterward had to make an assignment. There's only one thing that's bothering me now—aside from something to eat—and that's the weather. It's turned so cold we can't sleep up here, without fire, and even if we had a stove we couldn't afford to run it, along with our other expenses. But there ought to be some way to get around the weather." Suddenly he began to ripple.

Oh, it's all right now," he declared. "I knew that there was a solution. We sleep in a warm place, with servants to keep the fires going. We are all right."

"When is this to be? Next winter?"

"Now—at once. Look here. We have annual passes on this railroad. A train leaves here about dark, going to Memphis. At about twelve o'clock it meets another train, coming back. We take the train at dark, change cars at midnight and get home in time for breakfast."

And this is what we did, during the cold weather, until the passes expired, and then again we were thrown upon the cold world. Things began to look discouraging. Old man Tupelo's health improved, and at last Warren's spirit began to flag. "I guess we'll have to pull out of this place," said he. "That old fellow's got his second breath. Saw him this morning, sitting at the window, gnawing a ham bone. He waved it at me by way of salute, and I staggered. Then I began to feel that it was useless to continue the fight. I have an offer to travel as subscription agent for a religious paper published in Little Rock and I guess I'll start out. This may not mean subscriptions, but it does mean something to eat."



THE END

In Little Rock we parted, he going up the Fort Smith road, and I turning attention to the typography of a morning paper. Not long afterward I received a letter from him in which he said.

> Come up to Conway. I have started a paper called the Arkansaw Traveler. With the first number which I send you to-day, have struck a paying basis. This is a prosperous town, and a widow who runs a boarding-house says that she will credit us for three months. But as the paper will pay from the jump, we can afford to give her a little something now and then to keep her in good humor. At last I have struck my gait. A judge here whom I have given an editorial notice says that no log-chains go here. So, we've got the law on our side.
>
> P. S. You needn't expect a copy of the paper to-day, as I haven't quite enough cash to get the necessary supplies out of the express office, but about to-morrow if you listen, you can hear the thing humming in the press. I think it will be a beauty, and printed so well you can read every word of it. Come at once. If you can't get transportation take the wagon road as it is somewhat nearer than by rail. But I think you can get around the conductor all right—and no matter which one it is, tell him that our paper has voted him the most popular and efficient conductor in the State.

This was the forerunner of another paper of the same name, which had a circulation throughout the country. The conductor was beguiled and put me down at Conway, where the press stood ready for the editor-in-chief to work off the first edition. The office was built on four blocks, one at each corner, and stood about two feet from the ground. Our "basement" was a resort for every hog in the town. At night I complained of the scraping, the squealing, but to silence me Warren brought forth his philosophy.

"Let them stay where they are. I like to hear them—always got meat within ear-shot, and that is a great improvement on food out of sight. Well, sir, I'm thinking of getting married. I have noticed that married men don't go tramping round as single men do. And a woman is mighty handy in a printing office. Why, I could soon teach her to set up the paper. This would give us time to visit among the farmers. Say, did I tell you of the death of old man Tupelo? Well, he's gone, and I want you to give him as good a send-off as you can. He was a kind old man, and we must give him a half column of as sad matter as we can rake up."

I don't know but that the paper might soon have reached a paying basis but for a serious accident. The hogs that slept under our office were fortunately of about the right height, thereby causing no physical disturbance; but one evening a strange hog came to town—a razor back, at least eight inches higher than the rest. And in attempting to get under, this strange hog tipped over the office and "pied" the establishment. We had not the time to pick out a printing plant, letter by letter, so we drifted away, and years have passed since then.

The End of the Deal—By Will Payne

(Continued from Page 5)

to her heart and brought the old man home to her breast. Her own eyes were wet from sympathy. They were lovers again.

"Never you mind, Lester," she said. "We'll get together what there is left. Maybe we'll be better off."

"There won't be much left, Susie. It's about all gone," said Wells. In his softened and loosened mood he began telling her about his money affairs, just as they used to talk those affairs over long ago, before his operations became too big and complicated, before he became immersed in his passion. He talked on and on, seeming to find sad consolation in putting it all before her. The talk rambled, touched on things far back in their lives. They were lovers again, sitting by the window in the dark room, holding each other's hands, sometimes weeping silently—as much over the precious resurrection of the past as over the present calamity.

Theirs had been a long engagement. For some years Wells had held the plan of coming to Chicago. Settling up his father's estate and realizing on the property had involved a delay. Again, after he had come to Chicago, some years had elapsed before he got himself satisfactorily under way, before he made a firm enough foundation. He had been thirty when he returned to New Jersey, rich, according to the simple hamlet standards, to marry Susan Mills. This long fidelity, this coming back in his success to claim her, had always lain in the woman's heart as a romance. She cherished it with a touch of poetry. It seemed something fine and knightly to her. The tradition had helped to keep her love fresh and strong.

"I meant to do mighty well by my girl," he said again, when they came back to that.

"Laura knows that; she knows," said the mother quickly. "Of course—you can't help a girl's falling in love." She made the suggestion gently, with a touch of anxiety.

It brought Harper to the old man's mind. "But maybe I ain't done as well by her as I ought," he confessed humbly. In this soft mood there was a sudden immense yearning to have his girl close by his heart. "If Harper can take care of her I won't stand in the way any more—if it's what she wants," he said. "You tell her, mother, that if Harper can take care of her I won't say any more. Tell her that from me."

"She'll be very happy. She's good, Lester," the mother murmured.

Wells arose as she got up. With a certain awkwardness he put his arm around her ample waist and kissed her. It was her knight come back again.

"Yes, I'm going to bed in a minute; I must smoke a little," he said quite cheerfully, with an odd conscious fondness in his voice. He accepted his ruin. He felt himself made simple and good again, cleansed and purified by this reunion.

She went out, happier than she had been in a long time. The happiness, the rekindled love and the need of love turned at once to Laura. She went to the daughter's room and turned on an electric lamp.

Laura turned, wrinkling her brows on account of the light, and awoke. She sat up abruptly in bed, staring at her mother with the confusion of a person suddenly aroused from deep sleep. Mrs. Wells sat on the edge of the bed. "Your father gives his consent, dear," she said.

"Consent——" repeated Laura, confused, unable to understand this summons in the middle of the night. "You mean—to Robert?"

"As soon as Robert can take care of you. He thinks it's for your happiness. He won't say anything more against it—as soon as Robert can take care of you. He wanted me to tell you so. He's good, dear."

A splendid dream dawned upon the girl. Her mind still scarcely comprehended; but her heart understood.

"He's good, dear," she heard her mother say.

"You tell him that I love him," said the girl. "Wait, I'll go myself."

"He'll be going to bed now, dear. You can tell him in the morning," she said.

Laura accepted this as she accepted all the rest, with simple, unquestioning mind. "You tell him that I love him," she said again, as though she could give her father her heart in her two hands.

"I wanted to tell you right away—so you'd know," said Mrs. Wells softly.

"Yes," said Laura simply.

She lay down again as her mother went out, looking into the dark, the warm languor of sleep gathering about her. It all seemed natural and simple because every person and everything was beautiful and lovely. Once she aroused with a sharp pang. The thought flickered in the dimness of her mind: "But it was only a dream!" At once she knew that the dream was true. She went to sleep with the dream rich and still in her heart.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

The Prophets of the Grain Fields

(Concluded from Page 7)

For years when the Government Bureau was the only authority making systematic crop reports covering the whole country shrewd and unscrupulous speculators tried every conceivable plan to locate a leak in the Department of Agriculture—any kind of a leak, either in roof or basement! The fact that there is no authentic record of such a leakage is a remarkable tribute to the integrity of the men who guard these official secrets. While the writer was Assistant Chief of the Government Bureau he had knowledge of an offer to a confidential clerk of a signed check for a blank amount if he would secure the figures of a cotton report one day in advance of issue, the clerk himself to fill in the amount of the check. The employee was not tempted, perhaps because such a check was thought too dangerous to negotiate; perhaps because he had no access to the figures without first bribing at least two responsible officers. The value of such advance information to a bold speculator may be appreciated from the fact that in exciting markets grain prices have fluctuated two to four cents a bushel upon the appearance of such a report. The speculative value of the Government report is now far less than it once was. It is no longer the sole source of definite information for the whole crop breadth. The private report now shares this honor, and as each has its partisans they are played off against each other.

In the variations of practical effects produced upon the market by crop reports is to be seen one of the most curious and contradicting features of this profession. At one time a report which should legitimately create a radical revolution of the market will fall flat and practically unheeded, while at another time a report of far less importance and made by the same authority will effect a complete upset of prices and turn the pit into a scene of uproar and chaos.

The most sensational piece of crop news ever issued by a recognized authority created scarcely a flurry on the market. This was a Government report of 1895. It indicated that the farm reserve of wheat was only seventy-five million bushels, or about one-half the amount expected. By all the laws of logic this authoritative announcement should have caused prices to go up by leaps and bounds. Instead there was only a slight advance at the opening of the next day's trading, and this was speedily lost.

On the other hand, in June, 1900, rumors had been current on the market that the spring wheat crop was suffering a moderate amount of damage. The Government report which had been made public the first of the month showed a high promise for the crop. Along with the rumors of damage from the spring wheat territory came denials equally strong. This led me to start on a trip of personal investigation. When on the ground I found that while the crop was green and of good appearance, there was a universally deficient root growth. This did not necessarily indicate a big crop failure, but warranted grave apprehension. My telegraphed report of only fifty words made after a week's personal investigation contained the observations I have here stated. Immediately on receipt of this report the market that day jumped to within a fraction of a five-cent advance, and prices went up until they had covered a forward movement of twenty-two cents a bushel.

The explanation of this striking inconsistency is a simple one. The Government report to which I have referred failed to reach the market at the "psychological moment." It had the greater weight of authority and contained news of far more moment than the private report. But the latter produced more sweeping results because it fell in with the nervous speculative mood of the trading world. One day finds the pit possessed of positive market convictions which only the most overwhelming evidence can change. At another time the spirit of hesitation and uncertainty is abroad and the faintest breath of rumor sets the weather-vane of prices to whirling.

Another suggestion often made to me contains the inference that no person is in so good a position to realize a fortune through speculation as the crop expert, who has a broad first knowledge of actual crop conditions and whose statements are quoted as authority for market movements. All that need be said on this score is that the crop expert has no more right to have a dollar's interest in the market than the judge on the bench has to a personal interest in a matter of litigation upon which he must pass judgment. Speculation is fatal to the crop expert; unconsciously it will warp his judgment and color his statements. His views and conclusions can have no permanent value after he is suspected of personal speculation. Often he is convinced that there is a sure and quick fortune in the market, but he soon schools himself to let such opportunities pass without second thought.

Men and Women of the Hour

Yarns of Schley and Lemly

It is not generally remembered that Captain Samuel C. Lemly, Judge-Advocate-General of the Navy (who will represent the Government before the Court of Inquiry created to look into the great sea fight at Santiago), was a Lieutenant on the Thetis under Schley when that distinguished officer commanded the Greely Relief Expedition in 1884.

"Lemly was the most studious member of our expedition," was the comment of one of the brave men who went on that perilous undertaking. "There were days when we had to move at the cautious rate of about two knots an hour. At such times some of the officers and men beguiled the tedium by shooting at walrus or at innumerable flocks of little auks. Eider ducks, brant geese, and ptarmigan tempted our sportsmen whenever we were stationary in the ice-pack. Lemly seldom joined in these diversions. His spare time was consumed over ponderous leather volumes. We used to call him the anchorite. And if any of his comrades, who esteemed him highly, and were proud of his intellectual accomplishments, succeeded in getting him to shoulder a rifle occasionally, it was more to have a little friendly fun at the studious Lieutenant's expense than in the hope that his indifferent marksmanship would add to the stock of game they were bagging. His mind was not on the shooting. 'Lemly couldn't hit one of Greenland's icy mountains' was a specimen of the good-natured banter provoked when the bookworm turned hunter.

"It was reserved, however, for the lawyer-Lieutenant to surprise our entire crew and by one act to rise to enviable leadership among the hunters. It occurred in Melville Bay. We were anchored at the edge of an ice-bar where we had disembarked Lieutenant Colwell and party to interview Eskimos and to make a search for cairns, caches, writings, or other indications of Greely's whereabouts. On the Bear and the Thetis it was a day of waiting. The weather being fair, and there being no fatal and treacherous water-blinks to be seen from the crow's nest, the crews of the two relief ships were given a holiday with the privilege of hunting for bears and seals. Several hours later one of the hunters who had separated from his mates was seen trudging over the ice field toward the Thetis. Close behind, and unobserved by the sailor, strode a polar bear. The spectacle caused a commotion on board. Some of the crack shots had not joined in the chase, and here was their opportunity, they thought. It was, of course, a difficult and delicate situation, for a misdirected shot might have brought down the sailor. There was a lot of comedy in the picture, too, and this, together with the general excitement, may have impaired their marksmanship. At all events, several shots were vainly fired, the bullets sinking ingloriously into the surrounding hummocks. The sailor, supposing that they were shooting birds, came on, blissfully unaware of the menace in his wake, and, fortunately for his peace of mind, not turning to look behind. The bear was gaining on him.

"At this juncture Lemly seized a rifle. Ordinarily his brother officers smiled when he took up a gun, and some say they did on this occasion, despite the seeming peril in which his action placed the unwitting sailor; but there was a look of determination in the Lieutenant's face and a steadiness in his movements that disarmed interference. In the presence of danger he had ceased to be the student. His habits of concentration came to his aid. He lifted his weapon, took aim deliberately, and fired. The bear leaped and fell, shot through the heart.

"We all rushed out, then, bravely enough. Up came two cubs gazing wonderingly at their stricken mother and protector. We took them captive, and on our return to the United States presented them to the menagerie at Central Park.

"Schley is a crack shot. He is equally sure, too, with carbine, rifle or revolver; but he took no part in the sport on the way north. There was too much serious business on his mind for any diversion. I never saw a man so deadly in earnest. His one thought and purpose was to effect the rescue of Greely. Schley had donned a blue shirt and had got down to a hard-working basis before we had passed Governor's Island on our embarkation from New York.

"You will notice in his book, The Rescue of Greely, a few pages about the crow's nest—a barrel-like arrangement attached to the foremast up against the topsail footropes. In the bottom is a trapdoor. To get to this eyrie one must climb the ratlines and then mount a Jacob's ladder. On an iron rod above the crow's nest is fixed a telescope. Schley tells how from this exalted station twine lines with colored cylindrical attachments at their lower ends were run to the bridge; and how a pull on the green meant 'starboard,' on the red 'port,' on the green and red 'steady,' and so on. He tells, too, how from this coign of vantage floes, bergs, ice-blinks, tides and currents, and all the mysterious dangers of Arctic voyaging could, by the closest watchfulness, be detected; but he omits to say who kept up that ceaseless watch by day and by night. It was the Commander himself. I have known him to be in that lookout forty-eight hours at a stretch. The only time he spent out of it, in fact, on the entire voyage from St. John's to Upernavik and beyond to the far desolations off Grinnell Land until he finally rescued the helpless survivors of the Greely expedition, were the enforced intervals required for sleep. Even then, the slightest alarm would arouse him and send him flying up the ratlines.

"We had ice-pilots on board and efficient men in every capacity, but Schley was determined that no danger should be unforeseen and no error of navigation committed through any neglect of duty on his part."

"Fighting Bob's" Best Stories

The public knows "Fighting Bob" as an incarnation of the American war spirit; and his picturesque and laconic candor on national issues is cherished as supreme expression of Anglo-Saxon independence and virility. For example, his statement, "If it be found that the Spaniards blew up the Maine there won't be anything but Spanish spoken in Hades for the next six months," gave him title, in popular estimation, to rank with Grant and Perry as a maker of immortal epigrams. To his familiars of the club and the mess and to Presidents who have sought his companionship Evans has long been known not only as a hero of the seas, but also as the drollest of raconteurs. His repertoire of anecdotes is seemingly inexhaustible.

Grover Cleveland has long been one of the Admiral's friends and admirers. The sea warrior's wit was intensely refreshing to the President, who, whenever it was convenient, insisted that Evans accompany him on his hunting and fishing trips. One summer in the Adirondacks the members of the Cleveland party began to indulge in the ancient custom of exchanging dazzling fish stories. Doctor Bryan had caught a muskellunge so large that two men could not lift it into the boat, and they had to tow it ashore. The President preserved a dignified reticence, as befitted his rank, but he had heard of a local fisherman in that region who had hooked a wall-eyed pike so enormous that it had to be chopped into half a dozen sections before the mountain-town grocer could weigh it on his platform scales.

When the President concluded, the company turned half appealingly, half triumphantly to Evans. His reputation for never permitting a story to pass without eclipsing it was now to be put to the test.

"I do not doubt these stories in the slightest," said he, "for I had the experience of my life on this very lake last year. A boatman was rowing and I had been trolling for some time without results, when suddenly an ugly lurch in the line made our Peterborough craft careen and tremble like a battleship under the recoil of a great gun. I was forced to let out the entire line to keep from capsizing, for that fish lashed the water and plunged about like a sea serpent gone mad. The whole line was not enough; that fish had a stronger pull than a successful politician, and presently the boatman gave a cry—the fish was overcoming him. I sprang to the oars, and together we bent the outriggers, but our combined strength was boy's play against that watery demon. I had fought with tarpon on the coasts of Florida, but I never dreamed of encountering any such leviathan in a mountain lake.

"It was all we could do to steer clear of logs and rocks; our boat shot through the water; the spray drenched us. At last there was a merciful slowing down of speed, and we knew that our dragon was getting winded. Soon we could resist him. We rowed excitedly ashore, pulled in the line, got our gaffs ready for action, and before we realized it ourselves we had him safely beached."

"And how much did your fish weigh?" demanded President Cleveland eagerly.

"Weigh?" responded Evans. "Oh, about three-quarters of a pound."

The Admiral, away from the stern realities of his calling, is seldom serious. A charming youthfulness of spirit animates him; and he is a strategic controversialist who can lead Fighting Bob into a debate.

"Tell me, Evans," said Mr. Cleveland in all seriousness as they rested in camp one evening, "what is the most dramatic instance of patriotic action that has ever come under your observation in the navy?"

"It occurred on the Indiana," replied Evans promptly. "Two Irishmen, Mike and Barney, had enlisted as able seamen. We had been three months on the cruise when the Fourth of July came around. The two sailors in question had arrived in America from their native land only a few days before they had shipped with me, and although this was their first experience of a glorious Fourth, they knew the meaning of the day and felt it to be a solemn duty to display a boundless amount of reverence. They happened to be on early watch together. As day broke, Barney suggested that they fire a salute from one of the eight-pounders on the forward deck.

"'No,' protested Mike; 'twill r-rouse up the entoire ship.'

"'Niver you mind,' retorted Barney; 'you hold this bucket ferninst the muzzle, so' (covering the mouth of the gun), 'and that will deaden the sound.'

"Mike did as Barney suggested, and the latter fired the salute. The gun went off with a mighty roar and confusion, carrying Mike out over the headrail and landing him in the deep.

"The disturbance caused a great ado. I had Barney summoned to my cabin.

"'Look here, my man,' said I, 'tell me everything that's happened.'

"'Shure,' he faltered, 'and it was only a bit av a cilibration av the anniversary av our indipindence.'

"'Where's Mike, your mate?' I demanded.

"Barney bowed profoundly. 'Shure and don't ask me,' he stammered.

"'I mean business,' I roared. 'Where is the other Irishman?'

"'Oh, Captain,' he groaned, 'he wint to get a bucket av wa-ater, and if he comes back as quick as he wint, shure and he's due this very minit.'

"No, Mr. President," added Evans, with the inimitable solemnity of expression which is a part of his art as a fabulist, "Mike was never recovered. The tragedy threw cold water, as it were, on the festivities we had planned for that day, but not a man who was on the Indiana at that time will ever cease to reflect upon the sober lesson the occurrence taught as to a sailor's duty to serve his country unreservedly at the cannon's mouth."

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Back-Yard Greenhouses

A prize violet

Carnations in stands for show

By René Bache

MANY a city back yard of ordinary size might be made to yield a comfortable income if the space were utilized in a common-sense fashion—that is to say, by roofing it with glass and converting it into a greenhouse for raising flowers and high-priced garden vegetables. Such a transformation could be easily accomplished with the help of a carpenter, and the cost of it would be relatively small, while the labor involved in carrying on such an enterprise is so light and pleasant as to be particularly attractive to women.

Most women, indeed, enjoy nothing so much as pottering about among growing things, and the profits to be derived from a business of this kind are surprisingly large, considering the size of the investment and the amount of work required.

Let us suppose, for example, that the back yard is fifty feet long by twenty-five feet wide. To convert it into a greenhouse, properly equipped in all respects, including apparatus for heating, would cost about $475. A good deal of money, one may think, but not very much when it is considered that the plant may be reasonably expected to yield something like $500 annually, clear gain, with proper management. Once paid for, it will require no further expenditure beyond occasional slight repairs, and the outlay for keeping it in running order is little more than the price of the coal for heating in winter.

Taking a yard of this size, in case it runs north and south, the greenhouse may be put up with an even span, both sides of the roof having the same slant and the same length of rafters. The width will be sufficient for "benches" on both sides and one in the middle, with two walks between. Any fairly expert carpenter can put up such a building, the glass being bought by the box, at a total cost of seventy dollars, and the "sash bars" (corresponding to roof rafters) are obtained ready made. Total expense for the house, $400, including benches and everything except the heating apparatus, which will come to $75.

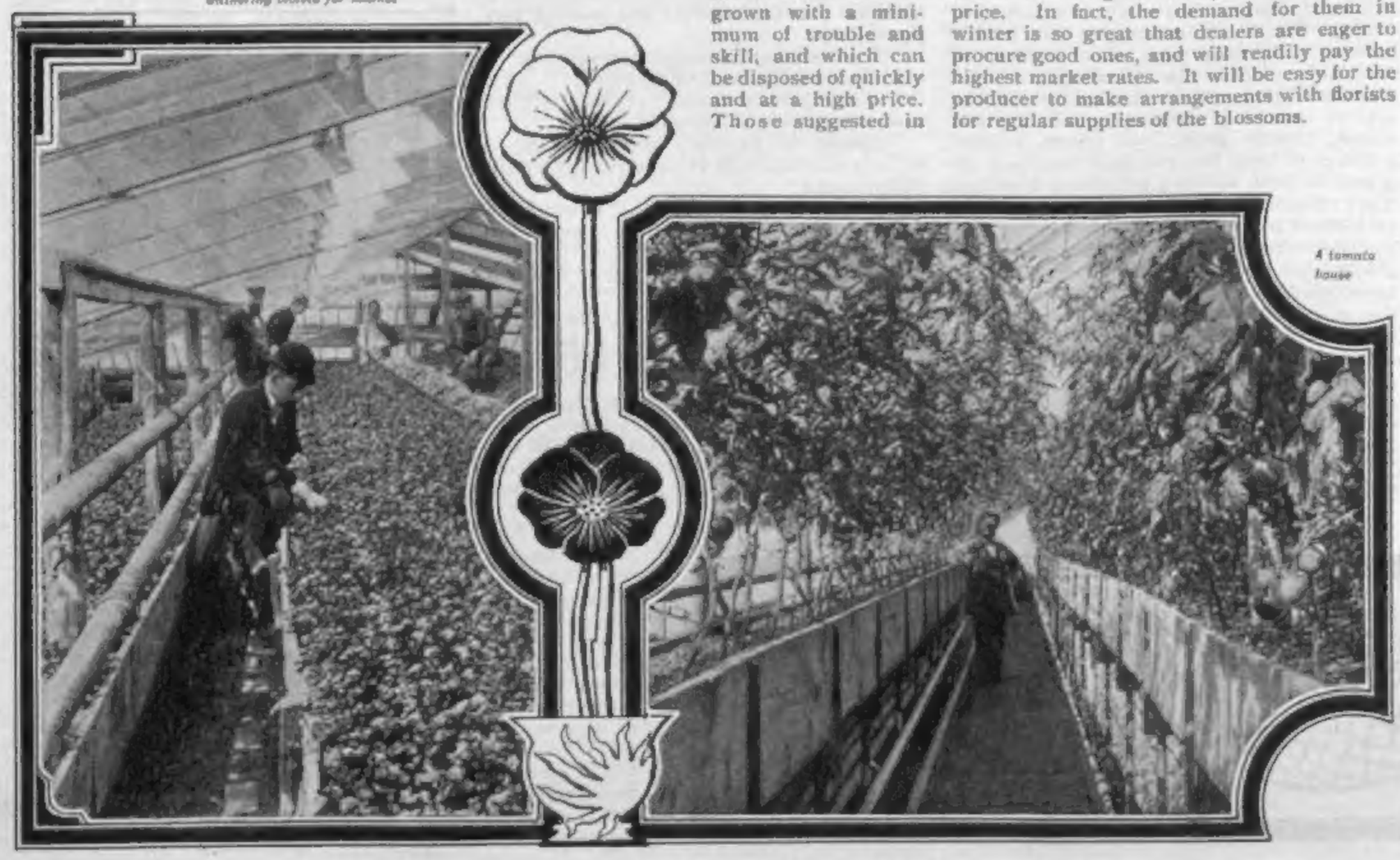
The benches, which are to hold the soil for the growing plants, should be three and one-half feet high. Underneath them, as will be explained later, mushrooms are to be grown as a sort of supplementary crop. For the rest, the amateur nurseryman may take his choice between flowers and vegetables, and, if he elects in favor of the former, violets and carnations will be most profitable. However, he may combine vegetables and flowers, in a way presently to be suggested, and thus extract every possible penny from his back-yard enterprise.

Two points are of obvious importance—a ready market, and ease of production. The crops to be chosen are those which can be grown with a minimum of trouble and skill, and which can be disposed of quickly and at a high price. Those suggested in this article are what are called "cool" crops, requiring no great amount of heat in winter, and they are of kinds that command ready sale. Certain products of the greenhouse are always in such demand, when offered at the proper season, as to command a market, with sure and satisfactory returns. There is no question of seeking purchasers in vain.

There is money in violets nowadays, and the demand for good ones in winter is always greater than the supply, but carnations are even more profitable, and therefore the amateur will do well to prefer the latter. Another point in favor of carnations is that they are easier to grow. One may buy the cuttings from flower-growers for five to fifteen dollars a thousand. The finest of all, which bears the name of Mrs. Thomas W. Lawson, comes at sixty dollars a thousand, but the Scott, which is a satisfactory variety, costs twelve dollars. The cuttings should be planted in rich soil, in the beds or in little pots. Pots are an item of expense, of course, but one may sell the carnations as potted plants later.

Carnations should begin bearing about the middle of November, and ought to go on producing flowers up to May 1. While growing they require no shade except in the hottest weather, and this need may be supplied simply by a thin coat of whitewash on the glass through which the sun's rays strike them. There will be no trouble in finding purchasers for the flowers, inasmuch as any florist will be glad to buy them at a good price. In fact, the demand for them in winter is so great that dealers are eager to procure good ones, and will readily pay the highest market rates. It will be easy for the producer to make arrangements with florists for regular supplies of the blossoms.

Gathering violets for market



A tomato house

"Much Too Stout"

The Corpulent Gentleman was Severely Lectured by a Life Insurance Agent

A professional man of some wealth and considerable size recently determined to take out an additional life insurance policy, but at the outstart was told by the agent that he was not a "good risk."

"Why," said the corpulent gentleman, "What's the matter? I am in good health, no aches or pains, nothing the matter with me. Why, I eat three hearty meals and several lunches every day."

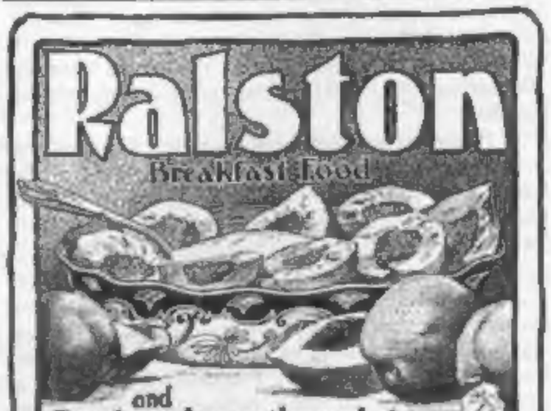
"That's just the trouble," said the insurance man; "you are not careful about what you eat; you are much too stout." "My friend," said the agent, "you eat too much starchy food—too much 'white' bread, for instance. Starchy foods produce fat—or rather, they make stout people still stouter. On thin people starch acts the other way—keeps them thin by ruining their digestion.

"'White' bread," the agent continued, "causes more corpulency than any other edible I know of. The wheat grain does not naturally make 'white' flour since the principal part of the wheat berry—in fact, all the most nutritive element—is of a dark color, and 'white' flour is 'white' simply because this nutritive part has been removed in milling."

"Now, if you will take my advice, you will eat bread made from Franklin Mills Flour. It is made from the entire wheat kernel ground whole; nothing is discarded except the outer husk. It is all nutriment and of more value as food than an equal amount of almost any other edible.

"Now, just you tell your wife to order Franklin Mills Flour from her grocer and if he don't keep it, write to The Franklin Mills Co., Lockport, N. Y., for their little booklet; they'll be glad to send it to you, free of charge."

Ralston Breakfast Food



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Part of the greenhouse, if desired, may be given up to violets, and a start is best made by buying cuttings from violet-growers in spring. Plant them in the beds, or in little pots, using rich garden soil, and they should begin to bear in mid-November, and continue to produce until the first of May. They require the same temperature as carnations, and that is why it is a good plan to grow them together. Plenty of air and coolness, with no stinting of water, are demanded; but in summer they require a good deal of shade, and this may always be furnished by whitewashing the glass heavily. Coolness is simply a matter of ventilation.

After Easter week violets become so cheap that it does not pay to produce them any longer. Accordingly, the young offshoots should be cut off and planted in moist sand in a shady corner of the greenhouse. A few days later they will have formed roots, and may then be set in rich earth out of doors for the summer—to be brought in and planted in the house when autumn arrives. When they have been thus transplanted in the fall all runners should be cut off, so that each plant may contract into a "crown," which is, in fact, a mass of young plants getting ready to bear. The first blossoms produced are small and of no market value, but by the middle of October they will be of good size and suitable for sale.

Different Varieties of Violets

There are a number of varieties of violets grown for market, though those most commonly cultivated are the Lady Hume Campbell and the Marie Louise. For the amateur nurseryman the Campbell is probably most suitable, being hardy, delightfully perfumed, and a free bearer. South of the latitude of Philadelphia the Marie Louise does not do very well, and it is more liable to such diseases as the leaf-spot, which within the last few years has caused enormous loss to flower-growers in this country. There is a giant violet known as the California which is not attacked by the spot complaint, and which, while fragrant and of an exquisite purple, has a remarkably long stem—a great advantage from the viewpoint of the seller of cut flowers. It is very vigorous, and endures cold so well that in California it is cultivated in the open air. A single plant often yields several hundred blooms.

For the rest, one who grows violets for market must give constant attention to the business of watering and weeding. The beds must be picked over every day, the mature blossoms being bunched by fifties, and care must be taken that no water shall touch them after they have been plucked, lest they be deprived of their perfume. Each flower should be examined as it is bunched, and finally the bunches ought to be folded loosely in paraffine paper and put into pasteboard boxes for delivery to the dealers. Nowadays the florist commonly provides a lace handkerchief, or at least a paper imitation, with every large bouquet of violets, throwing in a purple satin ribbon and an amethyst-headed pin with the purchase.

An average violet plant will produce fifty or more good violets during a winter, and, inasmuch as the flowers, as a rule, bring a cent apiece to the grower, and as at Christmas time they are likely to reach two cents, the profit is very satisfactory. Carnations, of course, command a much higher price. When spring has arrived, and their sale has ceased to be advantageous, they should be treated much like violets, the young offshoots being cut off and put into a bed of moist sand to form roots. About the middle of May they may be set out of doors to grow for the summer, care being taken to pinch off the buds as fast as they appear. When autumn arrives dig them up carefully and transplant them to the beds in the greenhouse.

Now, it appears from what has been said that there is quite a long period during which the greenhouse is not occupied by the flowers—a period which would be so much idle time, unproductive from the grower's viewpoint, were it not that certain vegetables may be made to take the place of the carnations and violets *ad interim*. Let the amateur nurseryman buy some good tomato seeds from a reliable seedsman, and start them about the first of February in boxes. Then, two or three weeks later, when they are fairly rooted, he may pull up his carnations and, after working some well-rotted manure plentifully into the beds, set out his tomatoes in their place. Removing the whitewash from the glass, he may allow the sun to do the rest, and the result will be a crop of fine tomatoes a month earlier than the same fruit can be raised in the open air. The vines should be suspended by strings from the roof, so as to make them assume an erect posture, economical of space and convenient for cultivation.

Another vegetable crop specially available for the back-yard greenhouse is head lettuce, seeds for which, of fine varieties, may be obtained from any seedsman. The seeds should be sown in shallow boxes, and, when the little plants are as big as a nickel piece, the best of them should be transplanted to other boxes and the poor ones thrown away. Again, select the best a few days later and transplant them to rich garden mould in the beds. Let not the temperature be too high—by day, fifty-five to sixty-five degrees, and at night never above fifty—and pretty soon there will be a good crop of easily salable stuff.

The Best-Paying Crop

Lettuce, indeed, is the best-paying general market crop grown in greenhouses, and one of the easiest to produce. The main points are to keep the house cool and well ventilated, and not to allow too much moisture. Seeds should be sown in September, and the heads will mature in about ten weeks. Two weeks before they are ripe, sow more seeds in the boxes, and, by the time the first batch is in condition to be cut, the young plants will be ready to occupy the soil thus vacated.

Cucumbers require a somewhat higher temperature—seventy to seventy-five degrees in the daytime, and sixty degrees at night. They should be trained on strings like tomatoes. Start the seeds in three-inch pots partly full of earth, and transplant the young plants directly to the beds as soon as they are fairly rooted. The "white spine" varieties of cucumbers require ninety days to mature, and each plant may be expected to yield from twenty to ninety fruits.

Watercress may be grown to great advantage beneath the benches, if the soil be kept very moist. However, the chief use for the ground-level of the greenhouse is properly the raising of mushrooms, which do well at the same low temperature that is suitable for carnations, violets and tomatoes. Make up the beds on the ground, facing them with ten-inch boards placed on edge, and utilizing for soil fresh stable-sweepings mixed with one-fourth garden loam. Preliminarily, the sweepings and the loam must be turned over daily for a week or so, until the extreme heat is out of them, and then they may be built into the bed, eight inches deep, packing them solidly. Leave the mixture until the heat subsides to ninety degrees, and then plant it with pieces of brick-spawn the size of a walnut (purchasable from any seedsman) in holes opened with a trowel three inches deep and six inches apart. Cover the bed thus prepared with two inches of garden loam, over which put four inches of hay or straw, and the first mushrooms may be expected to appear within six or eight weeks after the planting. Then the straw should be removed, and the crop may be gathered daily.

The above directions as to mushroom culture are taken from a special bulletin of the Department of Agriculture on the subject, and, if followed carefully, there is no reason why success should not be obtained. It is a fact that first-rate mushrooms are always in demand at forty to fifty cents a pound, and there is money in producing them, commission dealers, hotels and restaurants being glad to purchase them at a high figure, if only they are of satisfactory quality. To insure the quality, care and intelligent management are the requisites.

To heat the greenhouse will involve an expenditure of about nine tons of coal per annum. Seeds will cost only a trifle, and hardly anything after the first season, while manure will be an item of no material magnitude. The net profits on the flowers and vegetables, excluding watercress, ought to be at least $400, to which should be added sixty dollars for mushrooms and for watercress twenty-five dollars. Thus, the investment should, under favorable conditions, return itself in full every year, supposing that the nurseryman, or nurserywoman, gives proper attention and a reasonable amount of intelligence to the business. If only the possibilities in the case were realized, many back yards in cities would be largely under glass, yielding regular and satisfactory incomes to the owners.

In an enterprise of this kind, obviously, it is not advisable to try too many things at once. One should rather concentrate endeavor upon three or four crops at the utmost. The beginner, therefore, would be wise to devote himself, say, to carnations, mushrooms and watercress, succeeded by tomatoes in the spring. In such a course of proceeding he will have the advantage of a successful example furnished by many large growers for market near Philadelphia, who follow exactly this plan, and have made fortunes thereby.

Baskets of fresh-picked mushrooms, ready for market

Flowers Perfumed to Order

WHILE the notion of throwing a perfume on the violet would be undeniably absurd, there are certain other flowers, much prized for their beauty of form and color, which would be decidedly improved by the addition of agreeable odors. Of these a notable example is the chrysanthemum, which has either no smell at all or else an odor that is rather disagreeable than otherwise. Nevertheless, it may be that the famous Japanese blossom will, in the not remote future, acquire a satisfactory perfume of its own through skillful crossing of varieties, and attempts in this direction are said to have been made recently.

Pansies have a very delicate and pleasant odor, but it is so slight as to be hardly distinguishable by ordinary nostrils. Indeed, these butterflylike flowers are commonly regarded as scentless, having never been cultivated with a view to the improvement of their bouquet. It is a neglect easily remedied, however, and the production of strongly perfumed blossoms of this kind may fairly be expected as a coming achievement of the florist.

Flowers may be bred for perfume as well as for form and color; and in this connection it is interesting to consider some things that have been accomplished with Alpine plants. Such plants usually have very large and highly scented blossoms, because, owing to the comparative scarcity of insects in high mountain regions, it is necessary to make a big and attractive show in order to attract the small winged creatures whose aid is needed for accomplishing the process of fertilization. At the same time, one notices that vegetation at such altitudes is commonly fur-clad, being provided with a fuzzy coat as a protection against climatic conditions.

One might not imagine that plants native to such regions are susceptible of cultivation under ordinary conditions, but experiments have shown that the fact is quite otherwise. Three of the most beautiful varieties of cultivated pinks are of Alpine origin, their flowers being borne on stalks that are only three or four inches high.

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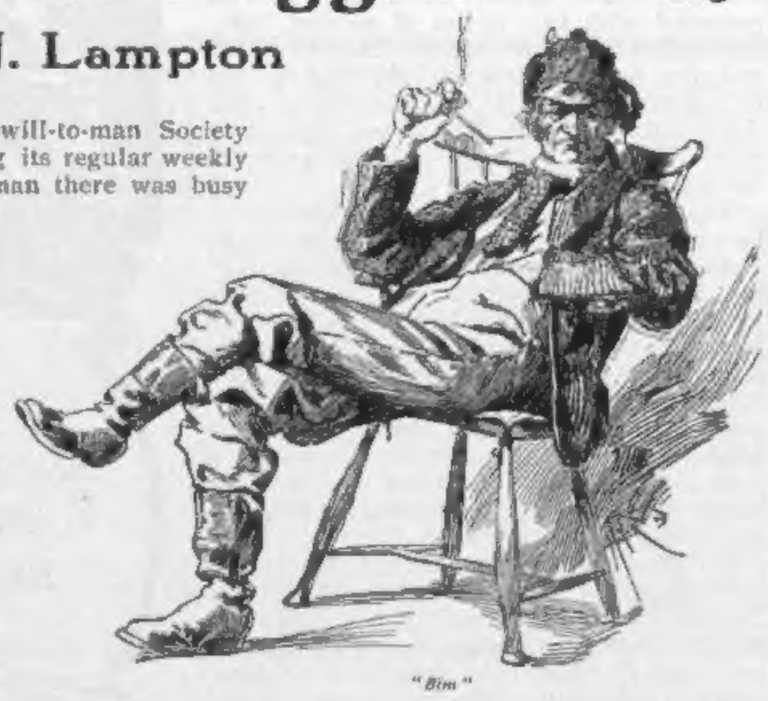
Abimelech Higgins' Way

By William J. Lampton


"Bim"

THE Peace-on-earth-good-will-to-man Society of Peachem was holding its regular weekly session, and every woman there was busy patching old garments and cutting out and sewing up new ones, or was otherwise industriously engaged in one branch of that charity which we have Scriptural authority for believing is greater than faith and hope.

"These pantaloons," remarked the wife of the postmaster, bringing a pair of emaciated trousers from a basket and holding them up for the inspection of the society, "is a perfect shame. 'Tisn't that I object to that kind of charity, or any kind for that matter, but I do hate to see a woman let her husband wear clothes till they ain't fit for a self-respecting scarecrow to appear in public in."

"Even a cup of cold water in charity, Sister Carroll," ventured the wife of the tailor, a gentle little woman who never harbored an unkind thought against a living creature.

"Of all women, you ought to be the last to advocate men's wearing their clothes too long," tartly responded Mrs. Carroll.

"Sh—sh," came from the wife of the druggist, who held up a reproving finger. "Charity begins at home, and we shouldn't quarrel among ourselves."

"Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity," said the wife of the pastor.

Mrs. Carroll smiled, letting the smile include the wife of the tailor.

"Whose pantaloons was these?" inquired Mrs. Sneckles, the wife of the grocer, reaching for the garments, quite regardless of the ethics and relevance of Mrs. Carroll's story.

"Mrs. Higgins sent them in," explained the secretary of the society.

"Oh," sniffed Mrs. Sneckles, giving the trousers a vicious jerk, "they're Abimelech Higgins' old pants, air they? Well, I'll bet a cooky if Marthy Higgins got them out of the house without a fuss it was when Abimelech was unconscious or away from home. He's closer than the skin on the back of your hand, and I don't believe he'd give up a single stitch of his old rags for an angel to wear, saying an angel would wear such."

"Charity, charity!" chorused a number of the ladies.

"Charity be flusticated," replied Mrs. Sneckles recklessly. "Charity may be greater than faith and hope, but justice is greater than the three of them, and I'm going to speak my mind about Abimelech Higgins though the whole firmament of the heavens caves in. He's got more money than any two people in the community has got and does less good with it than all the rest of us put together." A statement somewhat vague, but Mrs. Sneckles was careless of the quality of her ammunition so long as she succeeded in bringing down her game. "And he's getting worse every day of his life," she went on. "I've knowed him ever since he wasn't more than knee-high to a hop-toad, and he didn't use to be a bit like he is now. I mind mighty well when he married Marthy Biggs, one of the sweetest girls that ever lived, he give her a set of earrings and breastpin that cost fifteen dollars, wholesale, and for a long time he treated her as if she was a real human being. He used to have a way of keeping her in pocket money by letting her have the extry dollars he would git selling anything. For instance, if somebody offered him thirty dollars for a cow, Abimelech would dicker and dicker—he was the everlastin'est dickerer, anyway—till mebbe he would squeeze out thirty-one dollars or thirty-one and a half, or mebbe thirty-two, and when he come home he would put the thirty away and give Marthy the balance, 'jest to make it even,' as he always said. Of course Marthy never got more than four dollars and ninety odd cents, according to what Abimelech got, but she got it a good many times in the course of a year and so made out to git along without having to ask him for money, which no woman that has any respect for herself likes to do, and no man with any respect for her ought to let her do. As he got older he began to git closer and meaner with Marthy, though he called it 'necessary economy,' and the extrys come along so few and far between that Marthy began to look shabby, and bimeby stopped coming to the meetings of this society, as you all know, and I'm telling you now what the reason was, if you hadn't guessed it before."

The members of the society, by this time, had quit sewing to listen to the narrative of Mrs. Sneckles, and though she paused at this point no one ventured to say "Charity" to her—the watchword of the society, and the warning cry to the thoughtless of speech.

"But the meanest thing he ever done," resumed Mrs. Sneckles, "was when he sold that farm down on Sand Creek. You know it was a fine farm and he got ten thousand dollars for it, with some extry for a passel of odds and ends he insisted on having pay for, so's all that was coming to him, with the two cents for the stamp on the check that the man who drawed it didn't have at the time and Abimelech let him have, was $10,249.98. He told Marthy what he got for it—his telling her most everything is his only redeemin' trait—and being that she needed a new dress and other clothes and shoes and stockings and a bonnet, and the children all needed clothes, and she hadn't had any extry money for she didn't know when, she thought Abimelech would let her have something out of it, jest to make it even, if for no other reason. Ten thousand dollars was enough for him, anyway, for there was a whole lot in morgidges besides, and so Marthy dreamed of the new things she was going to get till her cheeks acchuly began to redden and her eyes to shine like they used to. She was hoping she would git the whole $249.98, but if she didn't she knew of so many nice little things she needed that she could get for the $49.98; but if she didn't get that she could get the children something for the $9.98, and even if she didn't get that ninety-eight cents would buy enough calico to make the two little girls new dresses to wear to school. I really don't know what some women is made of. I know I ain't made of it, for before I'd 'a' done like Marthy Higgins I'd chased Abimelech off the place with a broomstick.

"Well, Abimelech come home that day at noon with the money to let Marthy see it before he put it in the bank, and she was looking mighty cheerful, and had a nice dinner for him that she raised in her own garden and cooked herself, for he couldn't afford to have a hired girl, so he said. He come back in the dinin'-room where she was and spread it all on the table before her, and counted it out in five hundred-dollar bills, and hundreds and fifties, and tens and fives, and twos and ones, and on down to the nickels and coppers till the very last cent was in the pile.

"'There's $10,249.98, Marthy,' he says, drawing out the figures between his teeth like he was eating molasses candy.

"'Oh, Bim,' says Marthy—she always called him Bim—'ain't it perfectly lovely?' And she reached out for it as if she wanted to hug it to her bosom, but Abimelech, he put his hand out and stopped her.

"'There's only one thing lackin',' says he, looking at her like a sheep-killin' dog.

"'What's that, Bim?' she asked, kind of trembly, because she was afraid he was worrying about what he was going to give her.

"'Two cents, jest to make it even, Marthy,' he said. 'Ain't you got that much somewheres around that you can give me?'"

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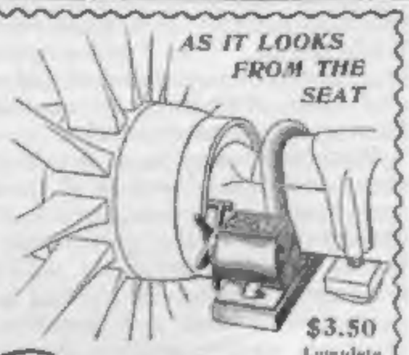
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